

# The Messenger

Rev T Appel DD  
31 Dec 77

"As the Truth is in Jesus."

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## THE MESSENGER.

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Editor-in-Chief.

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### Poetry.

For The Messenger.

#### THE GOOD WINE.

BY REV. J. H. DUBBS, D. D.

At the marriage feast of Cana  
Jesus gave a precious sign,  
When He changed the crystal water  
Into bright and sparkling wine.  
"Every man at the beginning"—  
One exclaimed with clouded brow—  
"Gives good wine, but thou hast kept it—  
Kept it even until now!"

Even so! our spirit answers,  
Knowing well who gave the wine:  
He, a better, fairer bridegroom,  
Wrought the work with power divine.  
But a draught of nobler vintage  
Joyously the spirits stirred  
Of the men who saw His glory,  
Who believed His blessed word.

Gathered from the vines of Eden  
In the world's primeval day;  
Growing mellow as the age  
Passed in silent state away;  
Watched by stewards of His kingdom  
Who believed the Father's vow,  
He had kept it for His people—  
Kept it even until now.

Nations fall and kingdoms vanish;  
History's page is growing dim;  
But the water-pots of Cana,  
Almost flowing o'er the brim,  
Still remain to show the meaning  
Of the Saviour's mystic sign,  
To refresh our thirsting spirits  
With their bright, celestial wine.

Still that wine is growing better;  
But the best, the prophets say,  
Christ has for His marriage supper  
In His palace laid away.  
When we taste that cup of blessing,  
While before the throne we bow,  
We will cry, "Thou, Lord, hast kept it—  
Kept it even until now!"

### Communications.

For The Messenger.

#### A PLEA FOR THE REFORMED QUARTERLY REVIEW.

The success of the *Reformirte Kirchenzeitung* shows what can be done by persevering united effort. That periodical has attained a subscription list amounting to nearly six thousand. It is ably edited, and takes rank among the best religious periodicals of the country. We read it with growing interest. Our German brethren are setting us an example of energy and enterprise, that must command the highest respect and that deserves imitation. We only need to come to understand each other better, in order to show that the English and German sections of the Church can work together in the most friendly relations. The Germans show themselves abundantly able to conduct their own institutions and periodicals with the best effect. In this respect a certain degree of independence works with the best results, while yet both sections stand together in the unity of one common Church. The same union of effort need only be made to place the *Messenger* on a sound self-supporting foundation. The present year ought to see the subscription list very materially increased. If this is not done, we must acknowledge that the Germans are more of a

reading people and more devoted to the interests of the Church than the English.

But we designed especially to make a plea for the increase of the *Review*. It starts out this year with a new name and begins a new series. Under the inspiration of the peace-measure, it aims now to become an organ for the whole Church, and therefore it will endeavor to have all sections represented in its columns. An article will appear in the January number on "The History of the Ohio Synod," which will be a valuable contribution to the history of our Church. Dr. Reiter, its author, deserves the thanks of the Church for contributing it. It was intimated by Dr. Rutenik some time ago, that if the *Review* is to become an organ for the whole Church, some German articles should also appear in its pages. The suggestion has force, and we see no reason why in a Church like ours the two principal languages now of America should not appear, especially in a *Review* whose readers are presumed to be literary in their tastes and scholarly in their attainments. We know not what the printers in Philadelphia would say, but as editor we should be glad to welcome a scholarly German article to its pages. We see no reason why, with the increasing attention given to the German language and literature in our country, such a feature should not commend a theological Quarterly, while it would show that in the Reformed Church at least, we are "at home" in both languages. If such an article should be presented we would guarantee sufficient familiarity with the language here at Lancaster, where German is studied in the whole college course, to read the proof correctly, provided the printers would be prepared to do the printing.

We need not say, that a Church, which has sustained the old *Mercersburg Review* through thirty years of its existence, needs a theological Quarterly now and in the years to come. Though comparatively small in this country, we have an honorable history, and carry one of the noble banners of the Reformation. It is a sacred duty to defend the true Reformation faith against the assaults of rationalism and infidelity that threaten its overthrow in this age, as well as to contribute our part towards a sound and healthy progress of that faith in the onward growth of the Church catholic. Our weekly periodicals, East and West, German and English, are doing their work, but there is a mission distinctive and important for the *Review*. Besides its work in other ways, in stimulating thought and providing intellectual food for our ministers especially, as well as for our intelligent laymen, it preserves many valuable articles of a historical character, and articles connected with historical occasions in our Church, which would otherwise be lost.

There is a suggestion which may perhaps be sometimes overlooked, and therefore we make it here. Our periodicals should not be confined in their circulation merely to one section or class. There are many, both in the East and West, who are abundantly able to subscribe both for *THE MESSENGER* and the *Christian World*. There are many in the English portion of the Church, who can take the German periodicals as well as the English, and there are among the Germans, those who can afford to take the English. In this way the wealthier membership of the Church can, at small expense, encourage and support all the Church publications. Besides the good thus done, the effect on themselves would be good. It would enlarge their views, by keeping them informed in regard to the whole Church. Many English families wish their children to study the German language. What can better promote this object than to have a German paper in the family.

Now what we would like to see is, that along with the friendly interchange of the weeklies, in such families as can afford it, the *Reformed Quarterly Review* be received into all sections of the Church. Without burdening any one, at least one hundred subscribers could be added to its list, and that promptly. We ask all to join hands and help to give it a self-supporting circulation. If the present Editor is not able to make it what it ought to be, we hope the Board will retire him and secure a better. But while he occupies the post of editor, he will do his best to meet all reasonable de-

mands. Brethren, let us signalize this year of grace by lifting our periodicals out of their crippled condition, and placing them on a solid foundation. If we do so, the close of the year will find us firmly bound together in the spirit of a peace that will last through coming years.

THE EDITOR OF THE REVIEW.

For The Messenger.

#### THE CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL.

There are some spirits that are never satisfied, but must always find some fault in everything. To such the peaceful and kindly celebration of Christmas, will present some things for their hypercriticism. The adornment of churches, the fitting up of the Christmas tree after the custom of the German fatherland, the presentation of gifts, such as cakes and candy, these things are not spiritual enough for their pious tastes. All this, in their view, is a bringing down of the spiritual into the earthly and sensuous. But we can afford to pass such criticism by, and rate it at what it is worth.

The Christmas festival has once more come and gone. In some sections it has been more of an occasion, doubtless, than in others. The German sections of the Church lay more stress on it perhaps than the English; yet everywhere it has been a day of joy and gladness. Of course its highest meaning is to be found directly in its spiritual character, the relation of the birth of the Christ-child to man's redemption from sin and death, and his restoration to communion with God. But in our present state, we need to have spiritual truth symbolized and brought home to us in sensible forms. Especially do children need this. Hence for them especially, though for us also, the decoration of churches possesses a vast influence. Some may cry, why all this trouble and waste? But, is not all this care and trouble, running it may be through weeks of labor in the way of preparation, a measure of our interest in the festival? All this ushers in the joyous season, and these decorations, remaining on through the season of Epiphany, keep before the eye the meaning of Christmas. Let us not croak or find fault, then, with what is done in this way out of love for the great gift of God to our fallen race.

But Christmas is not only for the Church, but also for the family. Who can measure the value of the kindly feelings of affection and love, that have been stirred up and strengthened in families by the Christmas season just passed away? One thought has indeed come into our mind, as we witnessed the vast expenditure in these family celebrations. Why was not all this money given to the poor? But we remembered the alabaster box, and him who carried the purse, who asked that question long ago. In one view much of the expenditure has gone to the poor. They have labored to prepare the toys and sweetmeats, and they have been benefited by this sale of their work. Then, it is not likely that the money expended for these family celebrations, would have gone to the poor, even if it had not been given in this way. Besides, this liberal spirit drawn out of the loved ones at home, is just the spirit that pities and cares for the poor. Hence we cannot croak over and criticize even this celebration of Christmas in the family. We read somewhere such a fault-finding article just before Christmas, and it grated on our feelings. We felt in reading it, that if an old-fashioned merry Christmas don't take fault-finding out of the heart, we do not know what can.

A LOVER OF ST. NICHOLAS.

### Selected.

#### UNION WITH CHRIST.

It is a precious fact that we may be united to Christ in a vital union, by which divine life and strength are imparted to us. The careful reader of the Bible cannot fail to be impressed with the variety of forms and the frequency with which this doctrine of the personal union of believers with Christ is taught. It is the burden of Christ's prayers for His disciples and of His conversations with them, as given in the closing chapters of John's Gospel, that they might be one with Him, even as He and the Fa-

ther are one. It is also the burden of the Apostles' teaching, that men may be brought into such close union with God as to be "partakers of the divine nature" and be "filled with all the fullness of God."

And how manifold are the forms of expression and the figures by which this great doctrine is taught. In one place the union between Christ and the believing soul is represented by that existing between the head and the members of the body, which are united in one physical organism and animated by one vital spark. In another place, the relation between Christ and the believer is said to be like that between the graft and the parent stock, which is one of vital union, since the graft partakes of the vital sap of the tree into which it is grafted. This metaphor, shows the entire dependence of the soul upon Christ for spiritual life and sustenance, since however poor in quality the parent stock may be, and however excellent the scion, the latter could neither grow nor live without being engrafted into the stock. But it fails to represent adequately the soul's participation of the divine nature, because the graft does not take on the nature of that into which it is grafted, but remains different, and has fruit peculiar to itself.

Wherefore, Christ's own metaphor: "I am the vine, ye are the branches," is the best representation of the complete union of the soul with Himself, and of its participation of His nature. For the branch not only derives its nourishment from the vine, but has the same life and the same nature as the vine; that is, this union is not one of dependence, merely, but of absolute likeness of character, implying that the Christian may be so completely invested with the mind of Christ, that his will shall be one with the Divine will, and his thoughts, emotions, affections and purposes such as Christ possessed. It is a union by participation and mutual indwelling. "Abide in me and I in you." "I in them and Thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one."

What a blessed privilege is here vouchsafed to the believer! to be one with Christ as He and the Father are one! And to feel amid all the conflicts of life that Christ is with us always, even unto the end of the world; that He is in us the hope of glory and the sure pledge of a blessed immortality, so that when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, we shall also appear with Him in glory!

This life of God in the soul we receive through "the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit." By exercising saving faith in Christ, we are born again, of water and of the Spirit, made new creatures in Christ Jesus. Then is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us, that love of God which is the evidence of His indwelling and union with the soul. For "God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God and God in him."

"His love within us shed abroad,  
Life's ever-springing well;  
Till God in us and we in God,  
In love eternal dwell."

—Methodist.

#### TWO KINDS OF RELIGION.

There are two kinds of religion in vogue among evangelicals, and they are pretty plainly at war with each other, wherever they have a contiguous residence. The one kind insists on vivacity, raciness in the church services, and gayety, sociability and amusement in the life of the people. It wishes ministers who can sing, read the Scriptures, pray and preach, all within the limits of an hour, and make the service sparkle with a liveliness bordering on levity itself. The other kind demands sobriety, earnestness, and the decorous, thoughtful way of worship that is recommended by Paul. It deprecates the effort to run the prayer-meetings, Sabbath-schools, and Sabbath services into mere entertainments, having for their object the gratification of the sensual tastes and appetites. These two kinds of religion are not morally friendly to each other. The gay is shocking to the thoughtful, the serious is unendurable to the volatile. It will be observed, however, that Christians, who wish to honor God, and to cultivate a piety such as that commended by the Scriptures, attach themselves to the re-

verent side, and conform to what it asks and demands. They who wish to be believers and yet pamper the flesh, serve God and mammon, and be lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, choose the other side, and look with a feeling half of pity and half of scorn at the deluded devotees, who go through the world taking up the cross and following the Master.—*United Presbyterian.*

#### GOSPEL PROGRESS IN FRANCE.

It is impossible not to be struck with the contrast between Catholicism and Protestantism in relation to this great Exhibition. The former was represented only by what it calls *objects of piety*, such as priestly ornaments, sacred vessels, and especially statues of the Virgin and of the saints. It has made no attempt whatever to exert any moral influence over the masses, and instead of sending forth missionaries to teach its doctrines, it has been content with silversmiths, like Demetrius of Ephesus, whose business it was to cry, *Great is Diana of the Ephesians*, because they made much money by this merchandise of her shrines. Catholicism makes its appeal to the masses increasingly through the eye, because it finds it more and more difficult to reach the hearts and consciences of men. There is a restless craving for great spectacles like those of Lourde and of La Salette, for miraculous waters, apocryphal miracles, the unhealthy excitement of pilgrimages. Thus the minds of the people get lulled and stupefied, and in this condition they are more easily brought under the yoke of the deified Pontiff.

To return to Protestantism. The movement of thought is still going on, which is drawing towards the Protestant faith many Frenchmen, who have not embraced a positive creed, but who are persuaded that such a faith is necessary, and that which Catholicism offers them is incompatible with the existing conditions of society. Recently in the department of Ain, whole communes have been asking to be organized as Protestant parishes. I say parishes, not churches, because all that they seek is to be allied externally with Protestantism. In this way the field of Evangelical missions would be widely enlarged, for we must be careful not to rest satisfied with a merely superficial reformation. The question of starting a new popular journal, at once political and religious, is for a time in abeyance.

With regard to the ecclesiastical crisis in the State Church, the summer has been a time of tranquillity, although grave discussion of a new professor of theology at Montauban. Under the second Empire, a Protestant commission of consultation called the Central Council was created, which was to be the medium between the Churches and the civil power. It was to exercise its office specially in transmitting the choice of professors of theology by the Consistories. Now it is found that this Council has lost most of its members. The orthodox party would like to dispense with it, saying that, after all, it was only the box which carried the letters of the Churches, and that the breaking up of the box should not prevent the letters reaching their destination. The anti-Synodal Protestants wish for a new nomination of the Central Council, in the hope of putting it in the place of those synodal institutions the dogmatic authority of which they reject. Thus the question constantly arises, whether Protestantism as by State established shall or shall not have this.—*Dr. E. De Pressense, in London Christian World.*

#### "THE GOLD THAT CANNOT PERISH."

Expose water to fire, and it dissolves in vapor; wood, and it vanishes in smoke and flame, leaving but gray ashes behind; iron, and it is converted into rust; but fire may play on gold for a thousand years without depriving it of a degree of its lustre or an atom of its weight. Beautiful emblem of the saints of God, gold cannot perish—their trials, like the action of fire on this precious metal, but purifying what they cannot destroy.—*Thomas Guthrie, D. D.*

If you see the precept proceeding from Christ's mouth, remember there is a promise in His heart, and an example in His life; never separate these.



## Family Reading.

## NOT FAR.

Not far, not far from the Kingdom,  
Yet in the shadow of sin,  
How many are coming and going,  
How few are entering in!

Not far from the golden gateway,  
Where voices whisper and wait:  
Fearing to enter in boldly,  
So lingering still at the gate;

Catching the strain of the music  
Floating so sweetly along,  
Knowing the song they are singing,  
Yet joining not in the song.

Seeing the warmth and the beauty,  
The infinite love and the light;  
Yet weary, and lonely, and waiting,  
Out in the desolate night!

Out in the dark and the danger,  
Out in the night and the cold,  
Though He is longing to lead them  
Tenderly into the fold.

Not far, not far from the Kingdom,  
'Tis only a little space;  
But it may be at last, and forever,  
Out of the resting place.

A ship came sailing and sailing  
Over a murmuring sea,  
And just in sight of the haven  
Down in the waves went she:

And the spars and the broken timbers  
Were cast on a storm-beat strand;  
And a cry went up in the darkness,  
Not far, not far from the land!

—English Congregationalist.

## IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD.

FROM THE GERMAN OF RIEHL.

In the year of our Lord 850 there had fallen misery in manifold shapes upon the German lands. The Norsemen had broken in upon the north coasts, plundering and murdering; Hesse and Thuringia were overrun by the Sorbes; famine prevailed throughout the country. The measure of distress was full.

In districts that were at peace it was estimated that every third man had died of hunger. But how it looked in regions that had been ravaged by the enemy, that no one can tell. The war had been waged as a war of extermination, and the invaders had trampled down all growing grain and destroyed all the stores, so that the remnant of the scanty harvest which God's pity had granted was snatched away by pitiless men.

Fiery tokens in the heavens by night had foreboded the calamitous time. A cloud mounted in the north, meeting another from the east. Hurling fiery missiles against each other, they joined battle in the upper heavens and wrestled like foes in deadly combat. The heart of every man quaked with fear, for all believed that the Lord had wholly turned away His face from the German people. Even the dogs are said to have howled more dismally in those days, and the birds sung mournful songs. False prophets arose on the Rhine and the Danube; and, like forerunners of Anti-Christ, foretold the speedy end of the last times; while many of the rulers of the earth administered their office with godless violence, as if neither their power, nor their lives, nor the world in which they ruled could ever come to an end and the throne of the Judge of all be set above the thrones of the kings of the world.

There lived at this time a freeman in the land of Fulda (his name has been forgotten), who had given away his little inherited estate to a nobleman of the country, in order to gain his powerful protection without becoming himself a slave, so that he and his descendants might at least be sure of a living from the land which had been in the full possession of his fathers. But in the turbulent days that followed, the nobleman died, his family became extinct, and another took his estates—the acres of this freeman with the rest.

The new proprietor was soon disposed wholly to enslave the peasant who had given up the half of his liberty in giving up his land. This had already happened in thousands of cases; and in the confusion and distress of the time the victim could find no protection against his lordly oppressor. Then there came to him a desperate courage, that made him prefer misery to slavery. There still lived within him the proud, defiant spirit of the old Germans. Many a time had he looked with scorn upon these new times, in which the man of war began to give way to the humble monk and the spiritless serf. His grandfather had seen in his boyhood the worship of the old gods in the sacred grove. Which were the better gods, the old or the new? With the old divinities had vanished the good old times; and now, as if in chastisement, long years of misery were following one another, and the new God of the Christians either lacked the power or the willingness to deliver His people from their distress. So thought the man in the land of Fulda. His mind was made up to help himself, with God's help or

without it, by the might of his own arm.

So he girded on his sword one night, and fled from the home no longer his, and from the oppression of his new master. He took nothing with him but his three choicest treasures—his wife, his child, and his sword; and, as it was in the severest depths of winter, the fugitives threw heavy skins for cloaks over their clothing. Neither food nor money had they to take with them in this time of poverty.

They thought to turn their steps to the Upper Main, and thence to press toward Thuringia and Saxony. That was a bold undertaking, for the way led through the midst of the starving land that had been devastated by the enemy, and it was in the short rough days just before the new year. But the fugitives were tough and storm-proof people, with steel in their limbs and stomachs used to hunger.

It was at this very time that King Louis, surnamed the German, broke two or three of his ribs at Glammersheim; but traveled on as if unhurt, suffered no groan to escape him, although you could hear the broken ribs grating one upon another, held a conference with his brother Charles, to effect a fraternal dismemberment of the kingdom of their brother Lothair, and then only, when he had got his portion, went back to Aix la Chapelle, to let his ribs grow together again at their leisure. Those were reckless times, reckless people, and reckless kings, little concerned over a sundered German empire or a few broken ribs.

It was New Year's Eve; the evening of the third day since the man from the land of Fulda fled with wife and child. The child was two years old, but was still fed at its mother's breast; for so this stout race brought up their stout children. Husband and wife carried the child by turn, and kept it carefully wrapped in the warm skin. The day had been bitterly cold. Icier still drew on the early evening. The wanderers had lost their way upon wooded mountains. On the first day alone had they had a mouthful of food given them by a half-famished peasant. Last night they had gone to bed hungry in the snow of the forest. In the morning the man had set out again with good heart; for he whose journey is from bondage to freedom does not mind the hardships of his way. An silence and wifely patience his companion walked beside him, the sleeping child upon her arm. But at midday they had lost themselves in the gorges of the mountain. Evening crept on. Nowhere could they espy the smoke of a hut. Only the tracks of game and of wild beasts crossed one another in the snow. Not once through all the long day had the comforting sign of human footsteps revived the spirits of the wanderers. The child waked oftener, cried harder and longer, and begged more piteously for the food which his mother could no longer give him.

Now and then the man's head began to swim and all his courage seemed to fail him at a stroke; but only for an instant. Then he lifted his head again and looked boldly onward into the endless wilderness, and his light step bore him along as strongly and cheerily as if the frosty branches had been decked with spring foliage, and the forest stream tumbling over the rocks, about which the frozen vapors gathered like a cloud of incense, had been a cooling fountain in May.

The Giant Son of the Northland (such was the name our ancestors gave to winter, calling him the cruel man with frozen breast) came into the man's thoughts in the dark moments that followed, and he began to fear, that the savage giant, the brother of Death, meant to murder him and his wife and child without compassion. He grew dizzy with cold and shuddered heavily.

But the woman, with pale, suffering face, looked like a Christian martyr led to be sacrificed to the Giant Son. Although quivering under bodily distress and anguish of heart, the face of her husband suddenly filled her with yet sharper pain. For as darkness fell and the last cold rays of the setting sun faded from the snowy tree-tops there came over his head features a fearful look. A conflict seemed passing through his soul. His eyes rolled unsteadily; his lips trembled; and he grasped the hilt of his sword as if to strike down the enemy with whom he was grappling. His beard and hair, fringed with hoarfrost, lightened the dreadful solemnity of his countenance; and in the double light of the glimmering red of sunset and the shining moon rising behind the mountains, he seemed an ancient heathen priest wrestling with the anger of the gods and making ready to slay the sin-offering here in the sanctuary of the forest.

The weary fugitives had now reached an eminence where black basaltic pillars rose from the covering of snow. Under a projecting rock, which these pillars supported like a roof, they found shelter from the wind, a space free from snow, and dry branches, which soon blazed up into a crackling fire. Here they decided

to pass the night; but gnawing hunger made sleep impossible. The child, too, wailed incessantly.

The father leaned against a rocky pillar and stared into the restless fire, or paced up and down before it with folded arms. From the leaping flames he turned his gaze to the cold light of the stars in the wintry sky. "The giants and heroes of olden times," he said to his wife, "are the stars that shine up there. Heretofore they have looked down upon us graciously; but see with what cold eyes they view us now, like Giant Winter himself, with the icy heart in his breast. The gods were wont to descend to the earth with help from heaven when our fathers still had faith in them and brought them offerings. Your priests have driven the old gods from our hearts; and now the gods keep heaven to themselves and misery remains with men."

The wife answered trembling, but full of faith: "One God alone has come down to earth, and as a man suffered for men. With His coming the earth became so full of God's presence that it needs not that any god should descend again."

The man was silent. Close at hand they heard the howling of hungry wolves. The woman was not terrified by the sound; but when she looked up again into her husband's face she was overcome with terror, for his eye was wilder than the eye of a wolf.

He began again: "When our fathers were caught in the toils of calamity, they thought on their guilt and their distress and prepared an offering for their sin. The heavier their guilt and their distress, so much the costlier must be the offering which they brought to appease the gods. Have not the minstrels told us secretly, for fear the monks would hear it, about the good Norse king, Domaldi, whom his people, his own people, brought to the altar, to offer him up as the best man of them all, that the gods might take away famine from the land? And as soon as the king's blood flowed from the sacrificial knife the famine abated."

The man spoke with gleaming eyes, and, as if possessed by frenzy, cleft the air with his sword, and his wife found no words to answer him.

"Thou didst not hear, woman," his tones growing still more ominous, "what the priest said who gave us our last morsel of food yesterday. Then hear it now! Archbishop Rhaban feeds daily in his court at Winkel hundreds of starving people, who throng to him in these times of want from all the country about. Not long ago there came a famished woman, with an infant in her arms. As she passed the threshold, she fell, from utter exhaustion, and breathed away her life. The child pressed its face to the breast of its dead mother, as if she were yet alive, and the roughest man could not keep the tears back at the sight. So fell the trunk that the branch might live. Ought not the mother, rather, to have offered up the child, that she might have remained alive, for her own sake and for the sake of her husband and her other children?"

The woman's voice came back to her. "No," she cried. "Blessed the mother who gave her life for her child! Sweeping heavenward, her soul looked back upon her boy, seeking food in vain at the dead breast, but saved. Sayest thou that she died of hunger? Oh! no. Her heart broke in excess of joy at having saved her child, and, overpowered with bliss, she yielded up her life."

Her husband sank into a deep silence. He covered his face to hide the sight of his wife sitting by the fire and gazing tenderly into the face of their sleeping child. Suddenly he sprang to his feet and strode up and down before the smouldering fire. "We must be nearing the hour," he exclaimed, "when the old year reaches out its hand to the new. When the priests count the years they say 'In the year of our Lord'; but of this God-forsaken year, full of misery and shame, one might well say 'In the year of the devil!'"

"And yet," she answered, mildly, "that one year in which our Lord was born among men brought such an overplus of blessing for all years to come that even the saddest year after the Lord's birth will still be a year of our Lord."

The husband took the child from its mother's breast. "The hour is precious! He looks into the future who stands, in the last hour of the year, upon the roof of his house, with his sword girt at his side, and turns his face eastward. One thing only would I know—whether we shall outlive to-morrow! Is not this rock our only house? Let me climb upon it with the child, after our ancestral custom; and, while I scan the future there, bethink myself here of the expiatory sacrifice in which the Norsemen slew their noblest man, their king, Domaldi, that the famine might be removed from the land!"

"But hear first," cried the wife in desperation, "the story of another sacrifice.

Hear what came to pass when Jehovah commanded Abraham to slay upon the altar his most precious treasure, his son Isaac."

The man did not listen. He rushed with the child toward the top of the rock and disappeared behind a thicket. The mother tried to follow him; but as she sprang from the fire she found that hunger had sucked the very marrow from her bones, and she fell senseless to the earth.

Suddenly the screaming of the child aroused her. As she listened, there came through the branches the sound of a struggle. Then all was still as death.

Summoning all her energies, she found strength to rise and darted into the thicket, whence she had heard the child's voice. Before her stood her husband, with glowing face, his sword dropped at his side; and in the bright moonlight she saw his arm and face spattered with blood and blood dripping from the sword. "My child!" she screamed. "Where is my child?"

Then her husband gave her back the child. It was lying upon his left arm, wrapped in the sheltering furs. The child was unharmed. It had fallen asleep again and was smiling in its sleep. "We are both safe!" said the man, in a broken voice. The wife sought to know what had happened. But her husband answered, tremblingly: "Finish the story about the sacrifice of that child whom God bade its own father slay." And, in amazement, scarce able to find words, she told of the offering of Isaac, ending with the verses of Scripture, which she had so often heard in the cloister at Fulda: "And He said, 'Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him; for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me.' And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and beheld behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns; and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt-offering in the stead of his son."

"So the story of the offering of King Domaldi has not been repeated to-day," said the husband; "but the story of the offering of Isaac. Behold! I too was about to offer up my son; but not like Abraham, because God had bidden it, but as a sacrifice to the angry gods of our fathers and that our lives might be saved by eating the flesh of our own child! But as I rushed into the thicket, reeling and maddened by my own purpose, I saw two wolves tearing the body of a deer. Then it was clear before my eyes again. I sprang forward, holding the child close to my side, and struck down the wild beasts with my sword. Here lies the deer that God has sent us—the ram in the son's stead!"

"And the offering of Isaac was but the offering of a great sacrifice," cried the wife, with the mien of a prophetess. "For when the fullness of time was come God Himself gave His only Son an offering for the guilt of all men. And ever since this last, true sacrifice we say of every year 'In the year of our Lord.'"

"Yes," said her husband, in subdued tones, "the last hour of the year has made it manifest. This year also was a year of our Lord!"

Sitting before the fire, they feasted on the venison. Then they fell into a peaceful sleep.

The morning sun of the New Year awakened the sleepers. They climbed to the top of the rock, to the place where last night the man had thought to view the future. A wonderful picture opened before their eyes. The broad, rich valley of the River Main shone in the sunlight; cottage after cottage rose out of the plain; and the smoke of a hundred fireplaces ascended in light clouds, that hung in the clear wintry air. The husband and wife kissed each other at the sight, and kissed their child. Then they fell on their knees and prayed. The husband could not look into his wife's face for shame. But she raised him up lovingly, and said: "Let us forget the old year, although it was no year of the devil. See, the New Year is but a few hours old; yet it has given such rich promise already that we can set out on our journey through it with joyful hearts. And the new pilgrimage begins where yesterday the old one ended—IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD."—Independent.

Christianity is a life. Christ, who is the life, is formed in them that believe. Christians are people who are made alive by the Spirit, whereas by nature they were dead in trespasses and sins. But when it is claimed that the present age has made progress in Christianity, in that it lays little stress upon doctrine but much upon life, there is a radical fault in the thinking. That religious life that is independent of gospel truth, is not Christian life. Natural religious feeling is not Christianity, and restless activity in good works may be mere legality and self-righteousness. The Christian life is a life of faith and therefore a life of love; but such faith clings to the truth in Jesus and lives by the truth. If we want a sound Christian

life we must have sound Christian doctrine.

## GATHERED HOME.

BY MATTIE L. ROBERTS.

The reapers were gathering in the grain,  
From the harvest fields beyond the hill,  
And down the valley their sweet refrain,  
Glad as a bird's song after the rain,  
Came to the farm-house, hushed and still,  
Where Rose lay dying.

There, in the little white room she loved,  
Where the woodbine shadows fell all day,  
Life, with its infinite pleasure and pain,  
Her short, young life was asked again;  
While over the hill-tops far away  
The harvest song was swelling.

"Open the casement wide," she said,  
"And draw the curtain, and let the leaves  
Dance and quiver about my head;—  
So they will blow when I am dead,  
And I shall not be knowing."

"O life, sweet life, that has been so dear!  
O death that once seemed strange and cold!  
I wait and listen if I may hear  
The voice that my soul has ceased to fear."  
Over the hills the glad song rolled,  
While Rose lay dying.

"I wonder if in that better land  
I may look back on earth's fleet day,  
With its smiles and tears? When this heart is  
stilled,  
Will all life's promises be fulfilled,  
And new hopes rise in the dear old way,  
When I am sleeping?"

The reapers had finished their pleasant song,  
And silent was every sound of strife,  
But a new light shone in the girlish eyes.  
"Sing," she said, "while the daylight dies,  
Some of the wonderful words of life,  
For I am weary."

The light had faded from out the west,  
And she never would see another sun.  
The mourners, standing about the place,  
Knew, by the luminous smile on her face,  
Life's quiet sands were nearly run.  
Rose, with the day, was dying.

Only the murmur of the wind  
Broke the stillness about her bed,  
While they who loved her hushed their tears,  
And watched, through the hours that seemed like  
years,  
Over the face of their beautiful dead,  
So quietly sleeping.

## ROUGH TRIALS.

It is rough work that polishes. Look at the pebbles on the shore! Far inland, where some arm of the sea thrust itself deep into the bosom of the land, and expanding into a salt loch, lies girdled by the mountains, sheltered from the storms that agitate the deep, the pebbles on the beach are rough, not beautiful; angular, not rounded. It is where long white lines of breakers roar, and the rattling shingle is rolled along the strand, that its pebbles are rounded and polished. As in nature, as in art, so in grace; it is rough treatment that gives souls, as well as stones, their lustre. The more the diamond is out the brighter it sparkles; and in what seems hard dealing there God has no end in view but to perfect His people.—Dr. Guthrie.

## Useful Hints and Recipes.

**SNOW PUDDING.**—Soak half a box of gelatine in a teacup of cold water, pour on it one pint of boiling water; set in a cool place, but do not let it harden. Beat the whites of three eggs, to which add three cups of sugar, and the juice of two lemons; mix with gelatine and pour into molds to harden; serve with cream.

**WHITE FRUIT CAKE.**—One cup of butter, two cups of sugar, one scant cup of sweet milk, whites of five eggs, one grated cocoanut, one pound of almonds blanched and cut fine, one pound of citron cut into very thin pieces, three and a half cups of sifted flour, two heaping teaspoonfuls of baking powder. Flour the fruit and add the last thing.

**RAW OYSTERS.**—Select fine oysters, drain in a colander, pick out all bits of shell, sprinkle well with pepper and salt, and place on ice half an hour before serving. They may be taken to the table on a large block of ice hollowed out with a hot flat iron, or in a dish with pieces of ice scattered over them. Serve with slices of lemon, or vinegar and horseradish; or freeze oysters in the shell, open and serve, seasoning to taste.

**CHOW-CHOW.**—Two quarts of hard, white cabbage, chopped fine; one quart, each, of fine-chopped green tomato and cucumber; two heaping tablespoonfuls of chopped onion; two heaping tablespoonfuls of grated horse-radish. Mix all thoroughly together, and put them in layers in a pan or jar, with sprinkled layers of ground salt between and over the top. Press down compactly, cover, and leave for two days. On the second day after, prepare the vinegar pickle, with the addition of the ginger, allspice, mustard and curry. Drain the chopped vegetables and squeeze them in a strainer-cloth to get out all the brine. Boil the vinegar and spices ten minutes. Then put in the vegetables and boil half an hour.



## Miscellaneous.

## "O NEW YEAR, TEACH US FAITH."

OF "JOHN HALIFAX."

O new year, teach us Faith!  
The road of life is hard:  
When our feet bleed and scourging winds us  
scathe,  
Point thou to him whose visage is more marred  
Than any man's; who saith,  
"Make straight paths for your feet"—and to  
the oppress—  
"Come ye to Me, and I will give you rest."  
Yet hang some lamp like hope  
Above this unknown way,  
Kind year, to give our spirits freer scope,  
And our hands strength to work while it is day.  
But if that way must slope  
Tombward, oh, bring before our fading eyes  
The lamp of life, the hope that never dies.

Comfort our souls with love,  
Love of all human kind;  
Love special, close—in which like sheltered dove  
Each weary heart its own safe nest may find;  
And love that turns above  
Adoringly: contented to resign  
All loves, if need be, for the love Divine.

Friend, come thou like a friend,  
And whether bright thy face,  
Or dim with clouds we cannot comprehend,  
We'll hold out patient hands, each in his place,  
And trust thee to the end.  
Knowing thou leadest onwards to those spheres  
Where there are neither days, nor months, nor  
years.

—Illustrated Christian Weekly.

## COLORS IN LEAVES AND FLOWERS.

All common leaves contain pigment, known to chemists as chlorophyl, from which they derive their ordinary color. The cells of the leaf are stored with this pigment, while their transparent walls give them that superficial sheen which we notice so distinctly in the glossy foliage of the laurel and the bright fronds of the hart's-tongue fern. But very slight chemical changes in the composition of leaves suffice to give them a different color, which is not surprising when we recollect that color is nothing more than light, reflected in greater or less proportions of its constituent waves. The fashionable pelargoniums, coleuses, and begonias, or the dark sedums which are employed to form the quaint carpet-gardens so much in vogue, show us how easily the green coloring matter can be replaced by various shades of purple, red, and brown. These changes seem on the whole to be connected with some deficient nutrition of the foliage. It would appear that the normal and healthy pigment is a rich green; but that, as the leaf fades and dies, it passes through successive stages of orange, pink, and russet.

The autumn tints of the forest, the crimson hues of the Virginia creeper, and the transitory colors of a dying plant, all show us these passing nuances. If a single leaf, or even a particular spot upon a leaf, is insufficiently supplied with nutriment, its first symptom of ill-health is a tendency to paleness or jaundiced yellowness. If an insect turns some portion of it into a gall-nut or a blight, the tips assume a beautiful pink hue. In short, any constitutional weakness in the leaf brings about changes in its contained pigments which result in an altered mode of reflecting light. Or, to put the same fact in another way, any change in the composition of the pigments is apt to be accompanied by a change in their color. Now the ends of long branches are naturally the least nurtured portions of a plant, and the young leaves formed at such spots have a great tendency to assume a brown or pinky hue. Furthermore, these spots are exactly the places where flowers are formed; flowers being, as we saw above, mere collections of aborted leaves, destined to fulfil the functions of parents for future generations at the point where the vigorous growth of the original plant is beginning to fail.

Nothing can be more natural, therefore, than that the flower leaves should show an original tendency to exhibit the brilliant hues; a tendency which would of course be strengthened by natural selection if it gave the plant and its descendants any superiority over others in the struggle for life. It should be remembered, too, that the flower differs from the leaf in the fact that it is not self-supporting. The green portions of a plant are its mouths and stomach; they are perpetually engaged in assimilating from the air and the water those elements which are fitted for its growth. But the flower is a purely expensive structure; it does not feed itself; it is fed by other portions of the plant. It uses up, in the act of growing and expanding, energies derived from the food which has been stored up by the chlorophyl elsewhere. Accordingly, we might expect its pigment to present that less energetic, more worn-out form, which produces the brighter hues of autumn and the pink tips of a growing bough. From whatever point of view we regard it, we see that a flower is naturally supplied with some coloring matter less active than that

green substance which forms the assimilative agency in common leaves. It is easy, therefore, to guess how certain plants may have acquired the first tinge of color around their organs of fructification, and thus have attracted the eyes of insects by their superior brilliancy.—*Cornhill Magazine.*

## CHARLEMAGNE'S TABLE-CLOTH.

Aix-la-Chapelle was one of the favorite resources of Charlemagne. There were often assembled the lords and ladies of his court, with his own family, which consisted of several sons and one beautiful daughter. He was the most intelligent and powerful monarch of his time; his dominions were more extensive than those of the Roman Emperors had ever been. It is more than a thousand years since his death, yet his fame will endure to the end of time.

In the midst of the splendor of his position he was quite simple in his tastes and was particularly devoted to literature and science. Among his most intimate friends and admirers were men renowned for their learning.

One day after a grand entertainment had taken place in the palace, the guests were amused to see a page enter, and, on bended knee, present to his royal master a salver, on which was carelessly folded a soiled white table-cloth. Charlemagne, not in the least surprised, threw it into a fire, evidently prepared for the purpose. All eyes were fixed on the fabric, which did not smoke nor blaze, but only assumed a red-hot appearance. A few moments passed, and the monarch raised it from the furnace unharmed and white as snow.

"A miracle! a miracle!" they all exclaimed.

"No, good friends," answered the king; "this cloth is woven of a substance which fire purifies, but cannot destroy. It was known to the Greeks, who named it asbestos, meaning unchanged by fire; and an Italian writer, who had lived hundreds of years before our time, speaks of a cloth made from some vegetable product which could not be injured by heat. Another mentioned, with apparent sincerity, that it was manufactured 'from the hair of certain rats that lived in volcanoes.' We read also, that the marvelous cloth was used to wrap the dead before placing them on the funeral pile, that their ashes might be gathered separate from those of the wood."

Thus spoke the mighty Emperor for the instruction and edification of his guests.

While Charlemagne did not quite partake of the wild fancies of the Southern nations, it is not probable that he had a clear idea of the real structure of this mysterious substance. As time advanced, it was fully understood; and now that it has become of practical use, we cannot glance at a newspaper without seeing the advertisement, "Asbestos Materials."

Asbestos is a fibrous variety of a dark-colored rock resembling iron-ore; this is known by the name of hornblende. Pyroxene, another mineral, also assumes this appearance, but not so often as the former.

We cannot understand how one of the toughest stones can be transformed into a substance as soft, flexible, and white as floss silk; neither can we comprehend how the sparkling diamond is produced from charcoal. Yet we must accept these facts and try to learn all about them.

When the hard rock took this beautiful form, it was called by the Greeks amianthus, meaning undefiled, in reference to the ease of cleansing it by fire. This name is now used to distinguish it from the coarser and more impure varieties known as asbestos. It occurs in narrow seams in the rock, and is occasionally found in fibres two-thirds of a yard long. These have a rich satin lustre, and the slender filaments can easily be separated one from the other. A single one, if thrown into the fire, changes into a drop of enamelled glass, while a quantity can be heated without producing any change.

The silk-like appearance of amianthus gave to some ingenious ladies the thought of carding, spinning and weaving it into cloth of different degrees of fineness. Purses, gloves, caps, handkerchiefs and napkins were made of it, and sometimes articles were knitted from the soft, exquisite thread. The inhabitants of the Pyrenees wore girdles made of this substance, mingled with silver, which they esteemed not only for their beauty, but for some mysterious charm which they were thought to possess.

When Napoleon went to battle, he wore a shirt made of amianthus, which he easily cleansed by throwing it into the fire. In France and Bohemia firemen's clothes and gloves for handling hot iron were made from it. The Russians have also attempted the manufacture of incombustible paper. At one time it was hoped that an important branch of industry might be established

for the manufacture of this delicate and useful fabric; but the rarity of amianthus and the difficulty of carding it into durable thread, in consequence of its brittleness, have caused them now to be regarded only as curiosities.

Asbestos, besides being of a coarser texture than amianthus, differs from it in color; the latter is a creamy white, while the former is brown, green, and grayish white. It sometimes occurs in thin interlaced sheets between the cracks and fissures of rocks, and feels something like kid; it is then known as mountain leather; when in thicker masses, it is called mountain cork, referring to its elasticity. It is also found very hard and compact, and then receives the name of ligniform asbestos, from its resemblance to petrified wood.

Asbestos is found in many parts of Europe and various localities in the United States,—Staten Island, N. Y., especially yielding large quantities. It is now mined and transported to factories, where it is assorted, cleaned and prepared for the various purposes for which it is used.

It is made into paints of different colors, which are used to protect surfaces exposed to heat or water. Steam-pipes and boilers are covered with some preparation of it that prevents the escape of steam; it is also very valuable as packing in the joints of machinery, and is extensively used in the manufacture of fire-proof roofing and flooring.

Chemists find it very useful as a medium for straining acids, which do not affect this substance.

Asbestos steps aside from its useful career to surprise us by its appearance in one of the precious stones. The peculiar floating light in the gem known as cat-eye is due to filaments of asbestos passing through a greenish-gray chalcedony. In the East it is much worn as an amulet, because it is imagined to have the power of enriching the wearer.

This is a slight illustration of the manner in which the apparently useless objects in nature may become of service and ornament to man.—*N. Y. Observer.*

## LUDLOW CASTLE.

From Shrewsbury to Ludlow the road passes through the Golden Valley of Shropshire, which is a part of the pastoral and harvest land of England. It is bounded on one side by the famed hills of Church Stretton, with whose downs of living green those who know rural England have long ago been made familiar; but no one can understand that tender color of a sloping down until he has seen, on an English afternoon, the cool shadows of uneven clouds break in upon the rich golden sunlight. The whole interest of Ludlow centres in the old castle; not, perhaps, because of its associations with Prince Arthur and Queen Catharine, or that it stood sieges by King Stephen or Simon de Montfort, or that in one of its old turrets Butler wrote cantos of his satirical and many-colored "Hudibras," but because it was the birth-place of the immortal Milton's "Comus"—that long dream of musical melodies and magical loveliness, the mirror of his young mind and the "sun-fancies of his youth"—before the days of sorrow and gloom which produced the "Controversies" and "Paradise Lost."

Some one has said, "A poet's memory is indestructible, and clings for evermore to everything he touches;" and though Milton did not live here, and only came at the invitation of the Earl of Bridgewater, and wrote but a part of the poem in one of the small rooms of the tower, and saw it acted in the baronial hall, his spirit still haunts the old place, and has outlived the memories of kings. It is easy to imagine that many parts of the poem were written here, in the cool shadows of the leafy woods, where the dewy morning and the fragrant evening and all the laughing scenery of rural nature suggested the sweet images it contains. Here are the lanes, the alleys green, the bushy dell, dingle, and bosky bourn of that deep wood which made the daily walk and ancient neighborhood of Comus. There are the lovely streams and river-banks, the deep tangled forest and emerald meadow glades,

"From which a soft and solemn breathing sound  
Rose like a stream of rich distilled perfume,  
And sto e upon the air."

How real the images appear as one sits on the river-bank, under the branching trees, beside the gray majestic ruin, and recalls one and another of the exquisite lines with which the poem abounds! It is no longer a visionary dream or poet's sweet imagining, but a transcript of the scenes which the eye beholds, peopled by his fancy and humanized by his genius. There is a peculiar charm in thus localizing poetic scenes and fancies, and which is known only to those who have made pilgrimages to the homes of the singers of the world. Whether in the palaces of the great, the Inns of the Temple, or in the low cottage by the banks of the Doon, they are all alike the memorials of genius, and one does not envy that man "who can stand unmoved on any spot

rendered sacred by a great memory, or who does not feel his love and veneration for all that was good confirmed and strengthened, and himself elevated and ennobled."—Mrs. E. C. WALTON, in *Harper's Magazine.*

## Selections.

Those who hope for no other life are dead even for this.—*Gothie.*

To the brave there is but one sort of plebeian, and that is the coward.

Peace is such a precious jewel, that I would give anything for it but truth.—*Matthew Henry.*

The wealthy miser lives as a poor man here; but he must give account as a rich man in the day of judgment.

Trust him with little who, without proofs, trusts you with everything, or when he has proved you, with nothing.

May I feel my defects more and more, reach a higher holiness, and lie, with a lowly spirit, at the foot of the cross.—*Pike.*

He that knows how to pray has the secret of support in trouble, and of relief from anxiety; the power of soothing every care, and filling the soul with entire trust and confidence for the future.—*William Jay.*

It should cheer the steps of the servant of Jesus Christ as he journeys, to know that even in darkness his guide is still with him, and that that guide is the King of the country through which he is traveling. *John Foster.*

A sweet word not only turneth away wrath, but it leads to knowledge, to wisdom, to honor, pleasure and repose. It conducts to the best felicities of life, and attains the most gracious ends, by the least laborious means.

It is they who glorify who shall enjoy Him; they who deny themselves, who shall not be denied; they who labor on earth, who shall rest in heaven; they who bear the cross, who shall wear the crown; they who seek to bless others, who shall be blessed.—*Dr. Guthrie.*

I think that if you observe what justice and kindness both say to you in the journey of life, other people will be glad to walk with you, and be sorry to part with you; and that when you get to the end you will look back on your course with satisfaction and joy.—*F. W. P. Greenwood.*

How deep is God's yearning over rebellious man! When the sinner flees from Him, God pursues him; and not till he has long and deliberately rejected the divine entreaties, refusing to listen to the voice of the heavenly charmer charming never so wisely,—not till then does God cease His pursuit. And when He does cease it, He turns away more in sorrow than in wrath, saying, "Oh that my people had hearkened unto me!"

With such a grovelling heart how shall I dare Ask Thee, my Lord, to make Thy dwelling there!

Because the Bethlehem stable Thou didst share.

With restless passions, surging like a sea,  
How can I think to find repose for Thee?  
Because Thy voice hushed stormy Galilee.

With guilt's defilement stained without,  
within,  
How may I hope Thy cleansing grace to win?

Because Thou saidst, "I have forgiven thy sin."

With soul-affections stony cold and dead,  
What claim have I to plead for life instead?  
Because in Joseph's tomb was laid Thy head.

—Margaret J. Preston.

## Science and Art.

CHAIN PROPELLER.—Austin Emmet, of Norwalk, Conn., has invented a method of propelling canal boats by "chain propellers" which do not disturb the water, and the cost of which, it is claimed, will be but fifteen cents per mile, against twenty-five cents by horses.

The great high-level viaduct bridge, connecting the east and west sides of Cleveland, Ohio, was handed over to the city on the 27th ult. with great ceremony. The work upon this structure was commenced in August, 1874, and completed about November 1, 1878. Its length is 3,200 feet and its width 60 feet, except at the pivot span, which is 46 feet wide. The cost of the entire structure was from \$2,000,000 to \$2,250,000.

Homer, Dr. Schliemann argues, in a late letter to the *London Times*, can never have seen the Troy whose tragic fate he sings, because at his time, and probably ages before his time, it was buried beneath mountains of debris. From Homer's description one is led to expect to find in excavations that Priam's palace is a palace of polished stones, but the house found by Dr. Schliemann is built of unwrought stones joined with clay. In Homer's time public buildings and probably royal mansions were built of polished stones, so that he naturally attributes the same architecture to the house of Priam, using the poet's license.

COLOR OF THE HUMAN HAIR.—A paper of some interest has been read before the British Association, by Dr. Sorby, giving a provisional account of some experiments made by him with reference to the coloring matter contained in the human hair. Briefly stated, Dr. Sorby has been able to separate several well marked differently colored substances, and the chief of these were a black pigment and a red-brown substance, which, when oxidized, passed into a yellow coloring matter. Very red human hair contained a small quantity of a pink-red substance, yet by far the greater number of different tints may be accounted for, he thinks, by supposing that it contains a varying amount of the above-named three substances in mixture. In regard to the possibility of hair changing color in a day or night, Dr. S. takes the negative.

The Baromotor of M. Gaston Bozerian is attracting much attention in Paris. General Poncelet has already shown that a man most completely utilizes his power in ascending a staircase, where at each step he has to lift his own weight, and that a man who climbed a staircase for a day would do work equivalent to 280,800 kilogrammetres, while if he applied his force to turning a windlass the result would only be 172,800. M. Bozerian's baromotor is a sort of treadmill or staircase of two steps,

or pedals, on which alternately the operator applies his weight, the action being applied by a simple connection to a fly-wheel. There is also a windlass and crank which can be simultaneously operated; in this manner the full power of the man is brought to bear. For intermittent mechanical labors where a temporary force is to be applied, and where a steam engine is not always at hand, the baromotor is regarded as excellent. At the Exposition it was shown running a threshing-machine and a circular saw, and for pumping water it has been approved by a commission appointed by the Minister of Marine.

## Personal.

Hon. Caleb Cushing died at Newburyport, Mass., on the 2d inst., aged 79.

Hon. Robert W. Mackey, formerly State Treasurer of Pennsylvania, died in this city on New Year's day.

Empress Eugenie has recently sold to the Baron Hirsch three residences in Paris for \$400,000.

Madame Thiers, it is stated, is busily engaged with the proofs of her late husband's speeches, three volumes of which will appear in January.

Professor Henry's memory is to be honored by memorial services in the Hall of the House of Representatives on the 16th of January. Senator Withers and General Garfield will be among the speakers.

The late George M. Marsh, of Portsmouth, N. H., bequeaths the bulk of his property, estimated at about \$75,000, to the Episcopal Bishop of New Hampshire and other trustees, for the erection of an Episcopal church, to be called "Christ Church."

General Simon Cameron is quoted by *The Lancaster Examiner* as saying, that in addition to his undoubted fitness he was led to the selection of Mr. Bayard Taylor as Chargé d'Affaires in Russia because they had both started as printer boys, without friends or fortune, and both struggled for success against adverse circumstances, and that the selection then made had ever been a source of pleasure to him.

## Books and Periodicals.

THE LEGEND OF THE MOUND, by Frederica K. Witman. Harrisburg: Lane S. Hart.

We are sure that any partiality we may have for Mrs. Witman as a former parishioner who helped to lighten many a care, will not unduly influence us in the mention we may make of her modest little book; for the work has real merit which others will recognize. It is a pleasant, Penzance-like poem, based upon a legend connected with a mound on one of the fair-like islands that many have noticed in the Susquehanna near Harrisburg. Two tribes of Indians once dwelt there in peace, till a quarrel between two lads over a grasshopper led to a conflict, in which squaws, and finally chieftains, took part, without inquiring as to its purpose, or even its cause, until the dead lay thick on every side. Then they thought of their folly; buried their braves under a hillock, and left the island for other hunting grounds one evening at the setting of the sun, never more to return to the place marked and accursed by their unhallowed strife.

The legend, we suppose, has long been known, and often recited in the neighborhood, but Mrs. Witman has done well to preserve it in the amber of pure simple English verse. The poem forms a part of a book of about forty pages. It is printed on tinted paper, appropriate illustrated, and bound in green and gold, reflecting great credit on the publisher.

THE PREACHER AND HOMILETIC MONTHLY for January reports the following able sermons: "The Newness of God," by Henry J. Van Dyke, D. D.; "Soul Prosperity," by J. L. Burrows, D. D.; "Christ and the Poor Man," by James L. Ludlow, D. D.; "Lessons from the Epidemic in the South-West in 1878," by W. K. Tully, D. D.; "The Coming of Christ and the Character of His Kingdom," by E. A. Washburn, D. D.; "The Dumb Made to Speak," by Rev. John F. Clymer; "Expediency Out of Place in the Pulpit," by Noah Schenck, D. D.; "Mysterious Failure," by Rev. Thomas Kelly; "Music in the Soul," by Rev. B. D. Thomas; "Paul's One Theme," by Rev. J. G. Williams, Jr.; "Christ the True King of the People," by Rev. Joseph Odell; "Reforms in Funerals," by Rev. D. W. Rhodes; "The Divine Philosophy of Revivals," by Rev. David Winter; "An Honest Man's Dilemma," by Rev. W. Edwards; "Missionary Service," "The Grace of Liberty," by Rev. J. M. Boland, A. M.; "Wednesday Evening Service: 'The Minds,'" by C. F. Deems, D. D.; "Funeral Service: 'The Master's Shepherd Dog,'" by Justin D. Fulton, D. D.; "A Service of Song: 'The Gospel in Song,'" by Philip Phillips. In addition to the above we have in this number an interesting paper on "Effective Preaching in this Age of Popular Indifference and Philosophical Skepticism," by W. Sidney Randall, D. D.; "A Study in the Book of Revelation," by Rev. D. C. Hughes; a lengthy interview with the founder of the Fulton Street Prayer-Meeting; a suggestive Commentary by the Editor on a Harmony of the Gospels; letters from Drs. Cuyler, Burchard, and many other clergymen, under the heading of "Preachers' Exchanging Views," a number of "Hints at the Meanings of Texts," a new department opens with this number, edited by Prof. E. P. Thwing, and entitled "Helpful Data in Current Literature." The Magazine is proving very popular among clergymen of all denominations. Published by The Religious Newspaper Agency, New York. Price, 25 cents per number; \$2.50 per year.

THE NEW VOLUME OF THE LIVING AGE. The number of *Littell's Living Age* for the week ending Jan'y 4th begins its one hundred and fortieth volume.

In this volume George MacDonald's new and increasingly interesting story, "Sir Gibbie," will be continued from week to week until completed; a new serial, "The Bride's Pass," by Sarah Tytler, whose stories "What She Came Through," and "Rev. Adam Cameron's Visit to London" attracted so much attention in *The Living Age*, will be begun in January; a serial story, "The Romance of Calcutta House," by Katharine S. Maquoid, author of "Patty," etc., is announced to appear early in the new year; choice short stories, for which *The Living Age* has become noted, including translations from the French, etc., will continue a feature of the magazine; and, through the year, the leading foreign authors will be represented in this department of the periodical.

In science, politics, theology and general literature, articles are mentioned as forthcoming from the foremost thinkers, investigators and writers, including W. H. Mallock, author of "Positivism on an Island," Dean Stanley, Rt. Hon. W. E. Gladstone, Jas. Anthony Froude, Prof. Goldwin Smith, Richard A. Proctor, Prof. Huxley, Dr. W. B. Carpenter, Prof. Max Müller, Matthew Arnold, and others, with sketches by R. D. Blackmore, author of "Lorna Doone," Wm. Black, Mrs. Oliphant, Anthony Trollope, etc. In short, with the recent great impetus given to foreign periodical literature, *The Living Age* promises to be richer than ever in the work of the ablest minds of the time, and will give their productions with a completeness not elsewhere attempted.

The beginning of a new year is a favorable time for the beginning of a subscription; and the publishers still present to new subscribers for 1879 the six numbers of 1878 containing the first parts of MacDonald's "Sir Gibbie."

For fifty-two numbers of sixty-four large pages each (or more than three thousand pages a year) the subscription price (\$8) is low; while for \$10.50 the publishers offer to send any one of the American \$4 monthlies or weeklies with *The Living Age* for a year, both post paid. LITTELL & GAY, Boston, Publishers.



## The Messenger.

REV. P. S. DAVIS, D. D., EDITOR-IN-CHIEF.

Rev. S. R. FISHER, D. D.,  
Rev. T. J. BARKLEY,  
Rev. A. R. KREMER,  
Synodical Editors.

TO CORRESPONDENTS. Communications on practical subjects and items of intelligence relating to the Church, are solicited. Persons who forward communications should not write anything pertaining to the business of the office on the back of their communications, but on a separate slip—or, if on the same sheet, in such a way, that it can be separated from the communication, without affecting it.

☞ We do not hold ourselves responsible for the return of unaccepted manuscripts.

For Terms, see First page.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 8, 1879.

## THE HELPING NATURE OF CHRIST'S WORK.

The first miracle of our Lord, like His first parable, has been called a "fit inauguration" of all the rest. When He changed the water into wine, He not only exercised His power, but illustrated the general nature of His work, in that He "ennobled the common, and transmuted the mean, turning the water of earth into the wine of Heaven."

This thought did not escape the mind of Augustine, whose power of interpretation enabled him to go beneath the surface of things, and open great rifts in the word of God, through which ulterior truth gleamed gloriously. And although the fact here mentioned has been overlooked by many, attention has been called to it from time to time by others. Trench, who has reached back to the early Church fathers, and also brought to the notice of English readers, the rich suggestions of German commentators, has emphasized it in his "Notes," and shown how they have dwelt upon it, contrasting the first miracle of Christ with that of Moses, who turned the water into blood, because the law was a ministration unto death, while the ministration of the Son of God was one of life. The weak and watery element of the Jewish dispensation, was now turned into the gladdening wine of a higher faith, and that act, by which the Redeemer of men first manifested His glory, "may be taken as a sign and symbol of all which He is evermore doing, ennobling all that He touches, making saints out of sinners, and, in the end, heaven out of earth, a new paradise of God out of the old wilderness of the world."

Any one will find an additional interest in His Bible, when he not only reads there, what Christ said and did, but studies the time and circumstances which seemed to call forth His words and acts. There was no hap-hazard in His perfect life, and the order of the record, was as truly under Divine direction, as the subject matter itself. And it is encouraging to poor humanity to know, that the very first act of His power spoke of help and relief, and that in all His ministry He never oppressed nor afflicted men. All His miracles were performed to heal them, and restore them to that normal state which had been disturbed by sin. Surely this great truth should inspire those who have started out in the cycle of the new Church Year to preach His gospel.

## BISMARCK'S "BOSWELL."

Dr. Busch seems likely to go down to posterity associated with Bismarck, very much as Boswell has been associated with Dr. Johnson. During the Franco-German War it was made his duty to read and mark such passages in the English, French, German and Belgian papers, as he deemed it right his chief should see. He had to translate such articles as the Chancellor thought would interest and amuse the King, and to write answers to such articles as ran counter to the policy of Prussia. Bismarck, it appears, while trusting much work to the Doctor, was continually looking over it, and criticising it, giving hints and commands, with a view to future contingencies. As might be expected, he made a great many remarks expressive of his opinions and plans, which people generally would not be likely to hear; remarks which show, at the same time, the true inwardness of the man, as no public speeches or State papers could do. These remarks Dr. Busch recorded from time to time in a diary, and

he has given them to the public in a book.

We have not seen the work itself, and we form our own idea of its character, only from a review of it lately published in the London *Spectator*. From the history of the book there given, and the quotations taken from it, it must be full of interest, showing up the peculiarities of the Chancellor, and a great deal of State craft. Since the day of Napoleon I., no man has had such a knowledge of every move on the chess-board, and no one has shown greater ability in turning things to account. The unification of Germany seemed to be for a long time the chief end he had in view. He did not wish to acquire territory from France, but when the apple fell into his lap, he did not throw it back. Alsace he was willing to leave as neutral ground, that is, if speaking French and paying tribute to the Emperor William could be called neutrality. His remarks about potentates and diplomatists, as well as about nationalities, would indicate that he has not always been candid to men's faces; but any laxity in that respect he presumes to have the moral quality of strategy in war. His real private opinions of men and things, he withheld from the public, but he expressed them apparently with great freedom before Dr. Busch. Some of his sayings, especially in regard to alliances between Jews and Christians, are not only inconsistent with his public policy, but show a coarseness that amounts to vulgarity.

It is strange in view of the disclosures the book makes, that it was allowed to be published, yet it has gone to a second edition in Leipsic, page for page and line for line as in the first, and no one has challenged it.

## DEDICATION AT FAIRFIELD, PA.

The congregation at Fairfield, Adams County, Pa., has been engaged during the past summer in the erection of a new church. The building formerly occupied by it in conjunction with a portion of the Presbyterian congregation at Marsh Creek, during a period of fifty years or more, had become too much dilapidated to accommodate comfortably the growing congregation. Hence, early in the summer, the erection of a new church was resolved upon, and, after buying out the interest of the Presbyterian Church in the old building and the lot on which it was located, the erection of a new church was commenced, and the work vigorously prosecuted, until a successful completion was reached. This building was dedicated to the worship of God, on the Sunday after Christmas. By special invitation, having been the pastor of the congregation forty years ago, it was our privilege to participate in the solemnities of the occasion.

The series of services connected with the dedication commenced on Friday morning previous. The opening sermon was preached by the Rev. John Ault, of Littlestown, Pa., in his usual earnest style. On Friday and Saturday evenings, the pulpit was occupied by the Rev. A. J. Heller, of Arendtsville, Pa., who preached two appropriate and impressive sermons. On Saturday morning the sermon was preached by the writer of this article. Rev. Dr. M. Kieffer, of Gettysburg, Pa., was present, and participated in the services, making, also, a very pertinent address.

The dedicatory services proper took place on Sunday morning. It was our privilege to preach the sermon on the occasion, whilst the dedicatory services were conducted by the pastor. We also preached again in the evening. Although the weather was extremely cold, yet the audiences, present at the several services, were large, especially on Saturday and Sunday, when every available space in the house was occupied. The deepest interest prevailed throughout the entire services, and all present will doubtless long remember the solemnities of the occasion, which seemed to be enjoyed by them, and from which, it is believed, some, if not many, derived special spiritual quickening and profit.

The church, for its size, is one of the neatest, most comfortable and imposing, which we have seen anywhere. Its style of architecture is Gothic. It is built of brick, and the windows are filled out

with finely ornamented stained glass. The pews are neat and comfortable, and cover every available space. The audience chamber is thirty-five by fifty-five feet, every part of which is fully utilized. The pulpit space is formed mainly by a recess extending back several feet. It is enclosed with chancel railing, and besides the altar and pulpit, contains a reading desk and baptismal font, all very conveniently arranged. In front, a vestibule is erected outside of the audience chamber, so that no space is lost by means of it. At the right corner of the building, as you enter, stands a very neat tower, which is twelve feet square at the base, and reaches a height of ninety-five feet. It is surmounted by a beautiful gilt cross, and encloses a sweetly toned bell. There is also a Greek cross at the front apex of the main building. A neat gallery is erected across the front end of the audience chamber, which is entered by a stairway through the tower, and contains an Estey organ. It was occupied during the services, mainly by a recently organized choir, under the lead of R. A. Lyttle, who led the music on the occasion, and deserves to be congratulated on their general efficiency and success. The acoustics of the church are very good, which is to be attributed, in great measure, to its neat open-timbered ceiling. There are no large unbroken, even surfaces, to produce a reflection of the voice of the speaker, which is so annoying in many churches.

The people of Fairfield have great reason to congratulate themselves on the success of their enterprise. The cost of the building was exceedingly moderate, reaching only about \$3,000. We have seen buildings inferior to it, which cost twice that amount of money. To us it seems a marvel, that such a fine church, and so well built, could be erected for that sum. It is a credit to the builder, as well as to the congregation. Long may they be privileged to enjoy it, and derive from the services held in it, that rich spiritual enjoyment, for which it is intended to provide! F.

## THE EPIPHANY.

The manifestation of Christ to the representative of the pagan world was the deeply expressive, though silent prophecy of His ascension word to the apostles: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." It was the token of the joyful deliverance of our fallen race from the power of sin and death.

The scene at Bethlehem, when the wise men from the East prostrated themselves before the Infant Saviour, and honored Him with the adoration of heart and lips, and the offerings of gold, frankincense and myrrh, presents to us in beautiful drama the first Christian sermon on gospel missions. Epiphany is a mission festival; and it is all vain to make a pretense of observing it, without striving to enter properly into the spirit of the truths and duties which it inculcates. It is designed to awaken in us holy zeal in the work of evangelizing the world. The eastern Magi represented the whole heathen world. And as they received the infant Jesus, so it is the will of God that all men should receive Him and be saved.

How, then, are we to observe the Epiphany season? We answer—By bringing gifts to Jesus. First of all, our hearts, our selves, that we may be wholly and truly His, in body and soul, in life and in death. And then, our labors and our substance. No doubt the gifts of the magi supported the holy family while they sojourned in Egypt; and so those earthly treasures which they poured out at His feet in Bethlehem served to uphold and promote the greatest work, the greatest enterprise, so to speak, that was ever projected on earth or in heaven. But the work has not ceased, and our co-operation with God in it is as needful now as was that of those noble representatives of the heathen world. We must take freely of the things which God has given us and lay them at the feet of Jesus. We must bring our money to His altar as an offering to Christ for the salvation of men. We must do this, if we would lay any claim to Christian discipleship. We will do it, if we love Christ and His cause.

Blessed Epiphany! God manifest in the flesh, that He might raise us, fallen and miserable, to the heights of eternal glory and blessedness. Christ in the manger, poor and helpless in His mother's arms, and worshiped by a few humble shepherds of the Jews and three devout heathen from afar, is the seed form of that infinitely glorious Epiphany when the Son of God shall be manifested without sin unto salvation, and all flesh shall appear in His presence. Therefore as we meditate upon the lessons, offer the prayers and sing the hymns of this precious season of the Christian year, let us do it in all sincerity, and observe that charity which is the soul and spirit of this high and joyful feast, and thus spread gladness where heathenism, with its miseries and horrors, still beclouds the souls of men—that both they and we may share in the final and glorious victory of Christ and His Church. K.

## ADVERTISING HERESY.

A large part of the records of the Christian Church is composed of statements of heresies, which have, at different times, sprung up in her bosom, and of accounts of the controversies, which followed before the truth was fully established. There have always been restless and dissatisfied minds, ready to make any number of "new departures," and to do their utmost to subvert the truth.

The present age is singularly prolific in bringing forth and nurturing unscriptural doctrines and ideas that have, again and again, been condemned by the decisions of the Church. The latest manifestation of this kind seems to be the so-called pre-millennarian doctrine of the Second Advent of our Saviour. Just what the advocates of this doctrine mean is difficult to understand. It is not the old Millerite absurdity of the Second Advent, but seems to be confined to assertions, backed by passages of Scripture, twisted from their natural connection, that Christ will come—we are not told how—before the Millennium. But has He not already come? Has not the promise: "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world," been fulfilled every day in the history of the Church, since the day of Pentecost? Why, then, so much ado about a doctrine as old as the history of the Church? There must be a reason for it. Is it true that a gospel has been preached, in which there was no living, present, personal Christ? If not, why are men taking each other by the ears, and becoming divided with regard to this matter? Is it true, that unscriptural and unchurchly views, as to the constant presence of Christ with His Church, are held and taught in orthodox Churches, and that the people have been taught to believe that there is nothing more than a spasmodic influence exerted upon the hearts of men in answer to their prayers?

Our attention has been called to this subject by the fact, that the religious world, in and around Pittsburgh, has been agitated over it for several weeks. The head of the so-called premillennarian movement, the man who has created this stir, is the proprietor of a shirt-store. He has, it seems, succeeded in persuading a few members of different Churches to adopt his views. As far as known, the movement has been carried on outside of all church organizations. Grave Doctors of Divinity have taken up the cudgel, and the shirt-man has been thoroughly lampooned. But mark the result. They have given him first-class notoriety, and his audiences have, consequently, increased in a few weeks, from a dozen or two, to several hundred.

Is this the right way to meet and subdue error and wrong? Would it not be better to teach the whole truth, as held by the Church in all ages? Would it not be better to meet the unscriptural views of a self-constituted teacher, by indoctrinating the people in this as well as in all other truths? Christian Ministers ought not to be afraid to preach the comforting doctrine, that Christ has come, is coming, and will come;—that He came when He was born in the manger; that He is coming in the sense that He is always really and personally present in the Church,—and that He will come to be the Judge of both the living and the

dead. They ought not to hesitate to declare what the Church, in her confession, has always taught, that the Church is the body of Christ—His Bride who is dear to Him as the apple of his eye—that she is the home of the Spirit, and the place where the Lord dwelleth forever, and that in the Church alone souls are born out of darkness into the marvelous light of God's truth and grace. Let this be done and there will seldom be any need to exorcise the backs of unauthorized teachers who have fallen upon portions of detached truth, because members of Churches have been persuaded to accept their erratic views. B.

## "SUNSHINE."

We are gratified to be able to state, that this little candidate for public favor, especially among the little ones, is meeting with encouraging success. Orders for it are received from all parts of the Church, from the West as well as from the East, and it seems destined to take its place among the several publications called for by the wants and interests of the Church. Sample copies have been pretty extensively distributed, and those who may find room for it among their little ones, will please send in their orders as early as possible, so that we may know how many copies it will be necessary to print for the next month, to supply the demand for it.

With pleasure we also add, that the renewals for the other Sunday School publications of the Church are coming in promptly, pretty generally and encouragingly. So ought it always to be. F.

## THE LATE CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL.

As will be seen from the reports in our present issue, the late Christmas festival was very generally observed, and that with more than usual interest. We have been obliged to abbreviate a number of the reports furnished. Had we not done so, it would have been impossible to have found room for all, for some weeks to come. Besides this, a repetition of similar particulars, becomes tedious to the reader. We have done the best we could to do full justice to all, and at the same time, to make our report of the festivities as they were severally held, readable and attractive. With all our condensation, however, we are still obliged to defer the publication of a portion of our report to a future number. F.

## MINUTES OF SYNOD.

The advance copies of the English edition of the Minutes of the late Synod of the United States were sent out during the past week. The German edition will also soon follow. They look well, and will, we trust, be favorably received by all to whom they are sent.

We acknowledge the receipt of a copy of the Minutes of the late Pittsburg Synod. They are gotten up in the readable form, for which its Stated Clerk has obtained an excellent reputation. F.

## SUNDAY SCHOOL HYMNAL.

During the late meeting of the Eastern Synod at Easton, Miss Alice Nevin was requested by a number of ministers, to prepare a Sunday School Hymnal for the use of the Reformed Church. It is not generally known, however, that she has entered upon the duty, and that the work will be given to the press in a month or two. It would be well for those who were perhaps stimulated by Miss Nevin's paper, published upon the subject some time ago, and for all others, to await the result of her labors, instead of looking in other directions for supplies, as many ignorant of her work, are now doing.

## VISITATION OF THE POOR.

The late cold weather has brought with it great suffering to the unemployed poor, and we do not believe there is a single case which would not be relieved if it were fully known. The difficulty is, the want of Church guilds that should find out as well as feed and clothe the destitute without encouraging mendicancy. Yet it is as much a duty to visit the afflicted as to supply their wants.



## CHRISTMAS REJOICINGS.

## SYNOD OF THE UNITED STATES.

The Christmas season was properly observed by the Reformed churches in Philadelphia. The usual services were had with the Sunday-schools, and much interest was taken in them, especially by the children.

The St. John's church, Wyoming, Delaware, passed through a very pleasant Christmas festival. The church was handsomely decorated, and the usual Christmas gifts were on hand. Various emblems of the names and titles of our Saviour, were presented by the different classes, which were explained by the pastor. The orphans were remembered on the occasion, so that the children of the school, whilst they received, also gave gifts.

The "Lebanon Standard" gives a very full and glowing account of the festivities, connected with the Christmas season, observed in the different churches of the place. Conspicuous among the number are the Reformed churches. The old First church especially seems to have entered with its accustomed energy into the spirit of the season, and St. John's Church also, was not far, if any behind. The pastors in both cases were prominent in the exercises, and made appropriate addresses. Gifts were distributed among the children. In the First church, the superintendent of the Infant department was surprised with the present of a fine pair of gold spectacles, and the sexton and his family were remembered with boxes of clothing. In St. John's Church, a contribution of \$22.50 was made to the orphans at Womelsdorf. The Sunday-school connected with the new congregation at Bismark, also turned the Christmas season to pleasant and profitable account.

The festival of Christmas was universally observed in the city of Lancaster, Pa. All places of business were closed, and all the churches were open. For days previous, the square and the markets were literally strewn with evergreens for families and churches.

Services were held in all the Reformed churches. It has been the custom for many years to hold an early morning service in the First church, of which Rev. John A. Peters is now pastor. Many persons from other churches in the city are accustomed to attend it. This year the large audience room and galleries were filled as usual, and all present were delighted. The decorations were in good taste and the music excellent.

There was a regular full service in St. Paul's church, at 10½ o'clock, including a sermon by the pastor, Rev. Shumaker, and a second service for the Sunday-school in the evening. Both services were well attended. St. John's (German) church, pastor, Dr. Külling, always observes the leading church festivals, and we presume they observed Christmas as usual, though we have no report of it. Dr. Külling will no doubt refer to it in the *Kirchenzeitung*, of which he is associate editor. St. Stephen's congregation is small during the holiday season, as the institutions are enjoying vacation, and most of the students are absent. Still a goodly number of the members assembled in the college chapel to join with the St. Stephen's Mission Sunday-school, at 10 o'clock, in their celebration. The chapel was tastefully decorated for the occasion, and the Christmas tree stood in its usual place, filled with gifts for the scholars. Miss Alice Nevin had charge of the singing. Addresses were delivered by Rev. John A. Peters and Dr. Thos. G. Apple. The whole service was under the charge of the missionary pastor, Rev. J. F. Wiant. The school numbers over one hundred scholars.

When Bro. Wiant organizes his mission congregation, as he proposes to do shortly, Lancaster will have five Reformed congregations. This mission is a child of the college church, in which a number of its younger members, male and female, have labored for several years. It has been taken under the care of the Board of Missions, and is encouraged and supported by the other English churches of the city. It meets a real want, especially among the poorer class in the western portion of the city. Many poor little children find in it a spiritual home. What purer work can the Church do than to gather such into its communion and prepare them for the heavenly home!

The Goshenhoppen and Trinity Reformed Churches, of which the Rev. Dr. C. Z. Weiser is pastor, held their usual Christmas festivals on Christmas eve and Christmas day. The churches were handsomely decorated and illuminated, and the scholars of the Sunday-schools, were drilled in suitable religious exercises. Contributions and offerings were received for the orphans, which aggregated \$160.

A correspondent writes us, that very interesting, instructive, and profitable Christmas services were held on the evenings of the 25th and 26th of December, at the Lower Tintinuc church, Bucks county, Pa., of the pastoral charge of the Rev. G. W. Roth. They were the first of the kind ever held in the place, and hence attracted more than usual attention. They were gotten up and carried forward by the pastor in connection with the Sunday-school.

The church was handsomely decorated. Numerous and appropriate mottoes and emblems were provided. The Christmas tree also occupied its conspicuous place, richly laden with gifts, which were distributed to happy recipients. Good music was discoursed, interesting recitations had, and brief appropriate addresses made, directed mainly to the children. In connection with the closing services of the second evening, there were several surprises, among which the pastor was included, who received a donation of \$5 from one not a member of the church, and from others a string of silver coins, aggregating together \$19. It was a very interesting and enjoyable occasion.

From a lengthy report published in the "Lebanon Courier," a copy of which was also furnished for our columns, we learn, that quite an interesting Christmas festival was held in Klopp's church, Tulpehocken charge, of which the Rev. Dr. C. H. Leinbach is pastor. Extensive preparations were made for the occasion, in the way of beautifying the audience chamber of the church, and providing appropriate religious service. A large audience was attracted to the place, both morning and evening, who were favored with appropriate addresses from the pastor, assistant pastor, and other visiting brethren. The distribution of gifts was by no means omitted, and the assistant pastor was specially remembered, receiving from teachers and officers of the school, the present of a beautiful sleigh, for which he will find abundant use during a winter season, like that which the present one promises to be. All passed off most pleasantly, a circumstance truly gratifying to all who industriously assisted in preparing for the occasion.

## POTOMAC SYNOD.

Trinity Reformed Church, York, Pa., of which the Rev. Dr. J. O. Miller is pastor, has been for some years noted for the manner in which its Sunday-school spends the Christmas season. From a brief report contained in the "Evening Dispatch" of that place, we infer, that the late Christmas festival was observed with the usual eclat. The decorations were full and elaborate, and the services such as to throw much interest into the occasion.

The Christmas season was duly observed by the Sunday-school of the Reformed Church at Littlestown, Adams county, Pa., of which the Rev. John Ault is pastor. For some years past, the occasion has been one of great interest in this congregation; but according to a report contained in the "York Evening Dispatch," that of the present year has excelled every previous one. The church was handsomely decorated, and the services full of interest. The latter consisted in singing by the school and also by the infant class, and sundry speeches delivered by little girls and boys. Of course, the usual distribution of confectionery was not wanting.

The Church at Martinsburg, W. Va., for some years past, has made great account of the Christmas festival. It did not fail to do so the present season. Services were held during the day and in the evening. In connection with the day services a collection was taken up in aid of Missions and in the evening, in aid of the orphans. All passed off pleasantly and happily.

The Second Reformed Church at Hagerstown, Md., of which the Rev. L. G. Kremer is pastor, had a very pleasant Christmas service in connection with their Sunday-school. The orphans at Womelsdorf, Pa. were remembered, the contributions for whom, from the children, amounted to \$2.15.

The church at Carlisle, Pa., of which the Rev. Dr. A. H. Kremer is pastor, held a service at 6 o'clock on Christmas morning, which was well attended, so much so that extra seats had to be provided in the way of introducing benches into the aisles, and was much enjoyed by all present. The church was handsomely and appropriately decorated. The choir furnished very choice music, and the services, which are spoken of as highly appropriate and deeply impressive, were conducted by the pastor, assisted by the Rev. Charles Albert, pastor of the English Lutheran Church. The Sunday-school held its anniversary exercises in the evening, which also proved an occasion of the deepest interest.

The Christmas season was very generally observed at Frederick City, Md. A full report of the festivities in the different churches is given in the papers of the place. The Reformed churches, of course, are conspicuous among the number. The German church, of which the Rev. H. Bielfeld is pastor, had its special services. Such was particularly the case with the English Church, of which the Rev. Dr. E. R. Echbach is pastor, which has been noted for some years past, for their manner of observing this Christian festival. Great preparations had been made in the way of furnishing the usual decorations. Premiums and gifts were liberally distributed. The school besides attending to other religious exercises, engaged largely in furnishing most excellent music, and the pastor did not fail to address the teachers and scholars in his usual happy and impressive manner. A special surprise gift was presented to Mrs. Birly by a few friends, in the shape of a handsome silver waiter, in appreciation of her services in the infant department.

## PITTSBURG SYNOD.

Rev. H. F. Keener furnishes us with a pretty full report of the doings of some of the churches in Somerset county, of which he is pastor, in connection with the late Christmas season. St. Luke's church stands on the top of the Allegheny mountains, along the Somerset and Bedford turnpike; near the source of the Blue Juniata. It has about one hundred members. During the past summer a good Sunday school has been carried forward, mainly by some worthy and energetic young men and ladies in the congregation. They never had a Christmas tree before, and it was determined to make proper account of this festive season for young and old. The church was finely decorated by willing hands. A nice tree laden with gifts and illuminated was there, and the little folks and big folks were there also, despite the cold and stormy weather on Christmas eve. Suitable music was rendered by the choir. The children sang, "Welcome, welcome, dear Redeemer." Altogether it was truly a festive night for old and young in Zion.

At Mt. Zion church, the festival was held on Christmas day at 11 o'clock, A. M. The house was suitably decorated. The tree with its gifts was also there, and so were young and old with gladsome countenances. The pastor came half an hour late, which was something unusual, but something unusual had also happened unto him on the way. He and his little daughter of about eight winters, started in a sleigh, and ere they had gone a mile through the storm and drifts, the sleigh upset and spilled them both out and Rowdy ran away like a hotly pursued deer, taking the sleigh with him until the thills broke and he was free. The parson gathered up his little girl, robe and blankets hastily, and followed up and caught a glimpse of the horse as he turned in towards the residence of one of his parishioners. This occasioned him a walk of about a long quarter of a mile, and there he took passage on a sled, leaving the horse to his ease and rest.

The festival was worthy of the occasion. Children were made glad and so were we all as we sang of the Saviour come and heard, "The sweet story of old." The weather was exceedingly inclement and cold, but the house was full enough for comfort, and all passed off pleasantly. This was also the first time a Christmas festival was held here. The orphans were not forgotten. The pastor and his family were also remembered. Mrs. Keener received an album quilt from the lady members of the Mt. Zion church and a silk handkerchief. She also received a nice cradle comfort from some ladies of the St. Luke Church. A box of honey and a new horse blanket were also received from St. Luke's Church. For all these gifts they are thankful.

The people at Greenville, Mercer county, Pa., enjoyed a pleasant Christmas festival. Their pastor, the Rev. F. B. Hahn, in the regular services of the sanctuary, makes proper account of the Church Year. Hence so prominent a season as that of Christmas could not be allowed to pass, without some special services. The usual preparations were made in the way of placing the church in a holiday attire, and providing for the services and observances belonging to such an occasion. The services were brief but interesting, and the

gifts were abundant and highly acceptable to the recipients. The pastor and his companion were not forgotten, the former receiving a purse containing \$10, in addition to his other gifts. It was an occasion of deep interest and pleasure to all who were privileged to be present.

## WESTERN CHURCH.

The Christmas festival was celebrated by the Pleasant Valley Reformed Church in Fremont county, Iowa, on Christmas evening. The pastor, the Rev. D. P. Lefever, informs us, that the exercises consisted of singing, prayer, essay, select reading, original poem and benediction. The children took part in the services, as well as the older members. One of the boys read the account of the birth of Christ, from St. Luke ii. 1-20; and after the reading, the children, led by the pastor's wife, sang an appropriate piece and repeated the Apostles' Creed, and joined in the Lord's prayer. Two Christmas trees were well loaded, one with candy for the little folks and the other with gifts for old and young. Among the gifts were a number, both handsome and useful for the pastor and his family; for which they are grateful to the kind donors.

The Sunday-school of Grace Reformed church, Wilton, Iowa, held a delightful service on Christmas eve. The pastor, the Rev. S. C. Long, furnishes a full account of them, which our want of room obliges us to abbreviate somewhat.

The week previous, a beautiful tree was secured, after a ride of thirty-eight miles through the snow. Evergreens seldom grow wild here, and are to be had only where cultivated. Quite an interest was awakened among the members, who gave their time in preparing the church for the festivities of the evening, and means for presents to adorn the tree, and for the children. The decorations throughout were plain but appropriate, and were such as are usually provided on such occasions. Beautiful and appropriate mottoes in frames, added to the adornment of the walls, and beautifying of the sanctuary, while the tree being placed in the chancel, completed the decorations.

At 7 P. M., the exercises of the evening, consisting of short recitations by the scholars, interspersed with appropriate songs from the "Companion of Praise," were opened at the tap of the bell, with singing by the choir, followed by prayer and chanting the "Gloria in Excelsis." Short portions of the 1st chap. of St. John's and 2d chap. of St. Luke's gospel, were recited by two of the boys, after which the other recitations took place in their order. Brief addresses were made by several persons, including the pastor, after which and during the singing of "Silent Night," the many wax tapers on the tree, loaded with candies, nuts, oranges and other more substantial gifts, were lighted. The lights of the church being lowered, the house was illuminated by the tree, which was a beautiful sight indeed, and judging from the expressions from the audience, was greatly admired by all.

The part of the programme in which the little ones were most interested, however, was yet to come, the distribution of the burden of the tree. They had not long to wait, and the joy and gladness in their sparkling eyes, expressed more plainly than words, their appreciation of the gifts received. Everyone in the audience, especially children, whether members or not, received a gift from the tree. Friends received gifts from friends, nor was the pastor forgotten. The congregation had quite a pleasant surprise in store for him. In the gift of a handsome gown and handkerchief, which were received with a grateful heart.

Everyone in the audience seemed happy, and a social, good feeling prevailed during the distribution of gifts. At the tap of the bell, silence again reigned, and after the chanting of the "Lord's Prayer," by the choir, the congregation was dismissed with the benediction.

From the Omaha, Nebraska, "Daily Bee," we learn, that the Reformed church in that city, of which the Rev. Theo. Falk is pastor, held a festival on Christmas eve. It is spoken of as a very pleasant affair. A beautiful Christmas tree was on hand. The decorations were very attractive, and the music of the very best character. All present were made happy.

From a very full report, published in one of the papers of Columbus City, Iowa, it appears, that the St. Paul's Church, six miles northwest of Columbus Junction, of which the Rev. C. Cort is pastor, enjoyed a more than usually interesting Christmas festival on Christmas eve. The indispensable Christmas tree, was on hand, with all its accompaniments, in prolific abundance, somewhat of a novelty in that region, and exciting the deepest interest amongst the large audience in attendance. Full and appropriate decorations also were not wanting to add to the attractions of the occasion. After the exercises were opened with prayer by the Superintendent, addresses were delivered by the pastor and several of the scholars. Essays also were read by several of the female scholars. One of the addresses by one of the boys, who was born seven years previous, on Christmas day, was somewhat of a novelty, and we here copy it.

Good friends! We bid you welcome here; We bid you share our Christmas cheer. Our Lord was born on Christmas day. The Prophets and the Fathers say.

Seven years ago this very eve,  
(I say with mother's kindest leave,) I first did breathe the air of earth:  
This was my day and hour of birth.

Thank God for birth in this dear land;  
Thank God for gifts on every hand.  
Each man and woman, girl and boy,  
Bless Jesus for our Christmas joy!

The audience was also favored with very fine music, an indispensable accompaniment on such an occasion. Good order and attention was maintained throughout and a healthy and happy influence, it is believed, was exerted by what took place.

The ladies of Trinity Church at Columbus Junction, a part of the pastoral charge of the Rev. C. Cort, improved the Christmas season, in the way of raising funds to pay off some pressing church and Sunday-school debts, by giving a Christmas dinner and supper. From a graphic description of what transpired, published in the papers to which we have already referred, we infer that the whole affair must have been one of special interest and attraction. At all events, it resulted, as it was intended to do, in furnishing what was needed, to remove the incumbrance resting upon the congregation and school, a consummation no doubt most ardently desired. They are certainly to be congratulated on the results.

F.

## LITERARY ENTERTAINMENT.

The "Thirteenth Anniversary of the Marshall Literary Society" of Mercersburg College was celebrated at the close of the fall term, Dec. 19th, in Trinity Reformed Church, Mercersburg, Pa. The entertainment, given by this society, was a success, and seemed to reflect some of the spirit and zeal which have all along animated the college itself.

There really seems to be a vigorous healthful educational atmosphere surrounding this old classic spot that can never be dissipated or dispelled. The students, young though they be, when they come to this mountain college home, are not long in imbibing the spirit and energy which have always characterized our educational work at Mercersburg. There is scarcely a question but that the success of many ministers now in the ranks of the Reformed Church, is largely due to the fact that they were brought up in this atmosphere. Perceptibly or imperceptibly they were inspired here with a zeal for the cause and kingdom of the Master. Some of them may have forgotten their old college home; they may now no longer feel the inspiring presence of Parnell, or Casey, or Two Top mountains, but the fires enkindled in their breasts, while students here, burn on, and the Church feels the influence of these sacred flames.

The young men chosen by the Marshall to represent her at her thirteenth anniversary filled their respective positions very creditably, and gave another unmistakable evidence of the earnest thorough work done at Mercersburg, both of the faculty and the students. The following was the programme of the evening: Salutatory—by T. F. Dice, Scotland, Pa. "The Aim of Study"—G. E. Gillan, St. Thomas, Pa. "The Penalty of Greatness"—O. J. H. Swift, Wilkinsburg, Pa. Eulogy—"Sir Matthew Hale"—C. W. Summey, Woodstock, Va. "It Might Have Been"—C. D. Schmitt, Woodstock, Va. "The National Heart"—W. W. Seibert, Clearspring, Md. Marshall Oration—"Cross and Crown"—D. N. Harnish, Water Street, Pa.

The music for the entertainment was furnished by Prof. Weber's orchestra, of Harrisburg, Pa., and consisted of choice selections from Weingarten, Aplitus, Piefke, Strauss, and others. In justice to the speakers and their themes, each of the orations deserves to be noticed separately, in order to give to some a word of commendation, by way of encouragement, and to others a little of the "friendly criticism" the Salutariorian invited, but it will require too much time and space.

These entertainments seem to be a quiet way of bringing the college before the public in its practical work. As such it is a great pleasure to those interested in Church education to witness these efforts in the good cause. For after all it is to these "work-shops"—the schools—that the Church must look for her outward strength. Without an efficient, well trained ministry, the Church cannot hope to do thorough work for Christ, or be able to meet and roll back the tide of evil that is pouring in upon her. Rationalism, skepticism, materialism, and bald infidelity have to be met and grappled with, to say nothing of heresy, schism, and error which continually threaten her very life. She is constantly forced to look back to her schools for young men of courage and zeal, with which to fill positions of honor and trust.

How is it possible to advance the standard of the cross, or bear forward the banners of the Church and plant them in the very camp of the enemy, unless we have leaders who are skilled in the tactics of this warfare? How are we to advance and sustain our missionary work at home and abroad, unless the schools furnish a constant supply of fearless, well-disciplined young men, who are inspired with the love of Christ, and are earnest and sincere in their efforts for His cause and kingdom?

To the schools then, we are thus forced to turn, while we pray "God give us men." And hence too much depends upon the character of the schools themselves, and their teaching. In this respect Mercersburg has made for itself a name in the Church, and outside of it, which cannot die. Unselfish toil, and long and well-sustained sacrifice in the cause of the Master cannot go unrewarded; for if His Church become ungrateful and refuse to reward the laborers, the Master Himself will place upon their heads "the crown of the faithful."

But the Church is too well aware of the "tower of strength" she has in Mercersburg to permit it to be surrendered. This "mountain fortress" of the Church seemed for a time to be threatened, and indeed is still in great danger; but it is now confidently expected that at no distant day it is to be thoroughly equipped and strengthened, so that its future usefulness may be even greater than that of the past.

Here, then, is an opportunity for the liberal-hearted to whom the Lord has intrusted the good things of this life. Here is an opportunity "to do good," "to distribute," "to communicate."

It is earnestly to be hoped that the good Reformed people who can, and ought, will come forward speedily to the relief of this good work, so that this struggling institution may be lifted entirely beyond the reach of crippling want. The Faculty seem cheerful and confident. They still stand firmly at their post, resolved to be faithful to the trust committed to them by the Church; but it is wrong not to help bear one another's burdens. May the great Head of the Church put it into the hearts of His people to respond to this call with Christian liberality.

The spring term of the college, we learn, will commence on Thursday, 2d of January, 1879.

POTOMAC.

## THE INSTITUTIONS AT LANCASTER.

The session in the Institutions at Lancaster opened at 10 o'clock, A. M., on the 2nd inst. When the hour arrived a goodly-sized audience had assembled in the chapel. It was feared that as the opening this year came just the day after New Year, there would be a small attendance of students; but a very large portion of them were promptly in their places, and quite a number of visitors and friends, among these last the venerable Dr. Nevin, whose interest in the college suffers no abatement with passing years. The usual devotional morning service was conducted by the president of the college, consisting of antiphonal reading of Scripture passages, a collect of confession of sin, the Scripture lesson and prayer. The singing was omitted. Professor F. K. Smyth then delivered the opening address, which was on Physical Culture. At the close of the address the different professors made what announcements were necessary in regard to the recitations, and the audience was dismissed with the benediction.

Several students fall out of line this term,

either because their scholarship is below the required grade, or for other reasons satisfactory to the faculty, who aim to keep up good discipline in the institution. Several new ones also fall into line in the college, and thus fill up their places. The college is in a healthful and flourishing condition. The attendance of students is larger than it has been for some years. The senior class is now the smallest class in college; hence the whole number, with a moderate number of additions, will increase during the next year. There are several additions also to the academy.

The Theological Seminary opened at the same time. The additions to the seminary this year have been twelve, over against eleven that graduated last year. Thus quietly and promptly the session in the Institutions opens, without delay or interruption. The schedule of studies on the Bulletin Board points out the order of recitations, and on the day following the opening, the classes are all in their places and recitations begin.

A.

## Church News.

## OUR OWN CHURCH.

## SYNOD OF THE UNITED STATES.

The Lord's Supper was administered in the St. Jacob's congregation of the Tulpehocken charge, Rev. Dr. Leinbach, pastor on Christmas morning. Nine persons were received into full communion with the Church through the solemn rite of confirmation. On last Lord's day the Holy Eucharist was celebrated in the Mt. Zion congregation and three persons received by confirmation.

## SYNOD OF THE POTOMAC.

The sacrament of the Lord's Supper was administered in Zion's Reformed church, constituting the Newburg charge, of which the Rev. J. M. Mickle is pastor, on the 29th of December. In connection with the services, two persons were added to the church by certificate. This makes the additions to the charge since the commencement of the present pastorate, a little more than a year ago, thirty-one, nineteen of whom were added by confirmation and twelve by certificate. The church is not only thus increasing in numerical strength, but the means of grace are more and more appreciated, as is evidenced by the attendance upon the regular services of the Lord's day and the faithful observance of the divine ordinances. The prospects of the congregation are thus truly encouraging.

As announced in the "MESSENGER" at the time, the Rev. L. G. Kremer, took charge of the Second Reformed Church in Hagerstown, Md., in October last. It had been vacant for some time. The church was, in many respects, uncomfortable, and needed thorough and general repairs. Though the congregation is numerically small, it went to work in good earnest, to provide that which was so much needed. A new substantial roof was put on the church. The pews, which had been very uncomfortable, were entirely reconstructed. Wainscoting was put around the church, as high up as the window sills. The walls and ceiling were neatly papered, and the floor covered with a handsome and substantial carpet. The seats and furniture were grained a dark walnut color, and the windows furnished with new blinds. These improvements add greatly to the beauty and comfort of the church, and were all made in the course of six weeks.

Appropriate reopening services were held on Sunday, the 29th of December. The sermon in the morning was preached by the pastor, though another had been expected to perform this service. It was an occasion of much interest and joy to both pastor and people. In the evening, the Rev. J. S. Kieffer, pastor of the First Reformed Church of Hagerstown, preached an excellent and impressive sermon from Psalm 122: 1, which was listened to with marked attention.

The pastor adds, that it is with great pleasure and gratitude to God, that he is able to state, that the money collected for the purpose very nearly covers the cost of the repairs, so that but a nominal amount is still needed to meet all their obligations. The friends of the Church in other denominations very kindly aided them with their contributions, for which also the recipients are truly grateful. They now have a comfortable and pleasant church, and both pastor and people are much encouraged.

F.

## COMPLIMENTARY RESOLUTIONS.

## THIRD REF. CHURCH, Balt. Dec. 26, 1878.

At a regular meeting of the Consistory of the church, held on the evening of the above date, the following resolutions were unanimously adopted:

WHEREAS, In consequence of the action of the Maryland Classis, upon a complaint presented to them by St. Paul's Mission School of this city, which has affected the vital interests of this congregation, our Pastor has deemed it his duty to tender his resignation,

Resolved, That whilst his course meets with our full and hearty approval, his resignation has been accepted only in consequence of his own urgent request, and then after the most sincere and profound regret that he, who has been so faithful in the discharge of his pastoral duties and who has so entwined himself about the hearts and affections of his people, who at all times has been the kind friend, the safe counselor, the gentle minister of comfort and consolation, should be compelled to sever the relation so pleasant and profitable, which has for eight years existed between us as pastor and people.

Resolved, That our prayers and benedictions will ever attend him in whatever field of labor he may be called by the providence of God.

Resolved, That the Secretary of the Consistory furnish him with a copy of these resolutions. By order of

EDWIN W. SPEAR,  
Secretary.

## FOREIGN MISSIONS.

Read at Harrisburg, Penna. viz.:	
Interest on Gehard, per G W Hensel, Treas	
Eastern Synod,	\$12 00
Pleasantville charge, per Rev U. Weidner,	
pastor,	22 50
Dreibach S S, Lewisburg, Pa, Rev G E Ad-	
dams, pastor,	20 90
S School, New Holland, Rev D W Gerhard,	
pastor,	6 05
St Peters Ref S S, Mt Pleasant, Pa, Rev C Z	
Beam, pastor,	3 00
Miss Elizabeth Dieffenbacher, Edwardsburg,	
Mieh,	3 40
	\$66 5
RUDOLPH F. KLEPPER,	
Treasurer.	



## Youth's Department.

## UNDER THE STARS.

O youth, rose-crowned, yet full of strife,  
Craving unapprehended joys,  
Hearing the desperate fight of life  
But as a far off, pleasant noise.  
Come, ere on thy bold way thou start,  
While not a cloud thy future mars,  
And still that wildly beating heart  
Under the stars.

O stormy prime, so beautiful  
With fierce delight, ecstatic pain;  
Spending and being spent; no lull;  
No rest; no count of loss or gain;  
Ere with tired feet thou come to tread  
The blood-stained field of endless wars;  
Pause—how the glories of thy head,  
Under the stars.

O heavy time, of brows disrowned,  
And hanging hands, and feeble knees,  
With piteous, pale ghosts haunted round,  
And longings for impossible ease;  
Nay, beat no more like wounded bird,  
Against fate's iron prison bars;  
When all sounds cease, God's voice is heard,  
Under the stars.

Soon, soon will come the supreme hour  
When like a painted shew life seems,  
Or perfume of remembered flower,  
Or dear dead faces seen in dreams.  
Clasp hands beneath the silent night  
That hushes all these mortal jars;  
God, Thou art Love—and Life—and Light  
Beyond the stars.

—Selected.

## CHRISTMAS LEGENDS.

BY THE REV. A. Z. GRAY.

Christmas has always been a legendary season—alternately dark or bright as the fears and hopes of the ignorant have given it coloring.

The spiritual significance and importance of the Church's great festival have been often sadly lost sight of in these superstitious ideas and observances. Unfortunately, the Church herself in her darker ages gave much encouragement to this gross materializing of her truth.

Let us take, *e. g.*, two or three of the gloomiest of these legends.

Once upon a time, in the cemetery of a humble village, a company of men and women were singing and dancing while the midnight mass was being celebrated, whereupon they were at once, and very properly, excommunicated. Their pleasure immediately became their punishment, and they found they could not stop their unseemly revelry. They continued singing and dancing for a whole year without a moment's cessation, until finally a kindly bishop, passing by, released them from the excommunication.

As the old story goes on to say some of them died in consequence; others slept thirty nights without once awaking; and the remainder, as was most natural indeed, never recovered from the nervous effects of the infliction.

There is another old popular belief that the animals possess the privilege of speech during Christmas night.

The ox, as veritable descendant of the honored beasts in Bethlehem's stable, is said to have the power of predicting future events, and even of relating the incidents omitted by the sacred narrative of that ever-memorable night. He is also proud of having been chosen as the emblem of St. Luke.

The lamb thinks of St. John, and recalls his sweet association with the Divine Infant.

The cock tells again the denial of St. Peter, as he sounds his early morning call.

The ass talks longest, perhaps, for he has to relate all about the flight into Egypt. He heard the voices of St. Joseph, the Blessed Virgin, and the Holy Child. He remembers how, in crossing the great desert, they became very thirsty. No oasis appeared to cheer and refresh them. Finally they met a caravan, which refused them the little water they needed. For this it was accused, and ever since this unholy caravan is wandering about without home or harbor.

It happened (legendarily, of course) once that a peasant farmer, more curious and braver than his neighbors, thought he would find out what the cattle were really saying. So one dark Christmas night he armed himself with his axe and hid himself in the stable. It was a windy, wretched night, and his spirits certainly were not raised by the creaking noises about him, and the howling of the dogs outside.

At last midnight sounded, and all the village bells began to peal out merrily. Pity indeed that our inquisitive friend had not stayed at home and been content with that. Suddenly he hears a peculiar voice near him, and redoubling his attention, finds it is one ox addressing the other.

"Friend," said the animal, "What shall we do to-morrow?"

"We will bear our master to his grave," replied his mate.

Overcome and indignant, the peasant raised his axe to chastise his plain-spoken beast, crying out, "Thou hast lied!"

But as he cried and struck, the instrument cleft his own brow, and the oxen did bear their master on the morrow to his long home.

So ingrained is this traditional belief—as regards the prophetic power of the cattle during the sacred night—that it is a common thing still in Brittany for the farmers to give them an extra allowance of provender. It must be an uncomfortable experience to have a beast able for awhile to relate all his unhappiness of the past year, and to predict all manner of punishment on his unmerciful master.

Other traditions, more or less pleasantly suggestive, abound among the humbler classes of Europe.

There is one venerable saint whose image stands a little pig, on which the faithful rub some grain to cure their own sick porkers, and the pilgrims to this same chapel have bread blessed for their cattle.

In one locality the good woman must put her bread into the oven at a certain moment during the midnight service, which bread she afterward sells at a good price to the farmers, that it may preserve their flocks and herds from the bites of wolves.

There is a beautiful custom in Picardy. A shepherd appears in the church bearing a new-born lamb in a beautiful basket, which he presents to be blessed by the officiating priest. Behind him come a band of youthful shepherds and shepherdesses, crook in hand, and laden with flowers and fruits. Then maidens clad in white carry the lamb about the church, singing old Christmas hymns, and the innocent animal itself is afterward considered as the protector of the flock. Happy the farm to which it belongs, where indeed it is always cared for most tenderly; and dark are the stories told concerning the avaricious owner who has dared to part with it for filthy lucre.

There are many other pleasant customs still to be found in those old French provinces, adding their poetry as well to our literature as to the simple lives that hold them, as, for instance again, where the young people make Christmas the time of their love-choice and betrothment; and woe to the mortal who ever proves untrue to such sweet-timed engagement!

Yes, it is a time above all others to teach a true and holy fidelity; and with another old Provençal legend of the sort let us close our *noël* talk:

There is a tradition, dating from the period of the Crusades, respecting a wild rose-bush that had been seen near the spot in Bethlehem of our Lord's nativity. Marvellous tales were told by returning pilgrims concerning it, to wit, that its roses bloomed perennially, and that its thorns never stung, etc., etc. It was called the Rose of Jericho, and preserved as a sacred relic in the churches.

When this flower was placed in a vase of holy water during Christmas-night service, it slowly opened its petals and revived into a beauty and fragrance strangely sweet, and then it returned to its faded condition. The water used in this mysterious operation was good to heal the sick.

The first of these roses, again, is said to have been formed from a drop of the Saviour's blood, and its seed to have been carried by the wind to the borders of Jericho, where it took its name. (In some old chronicles it was also called the passion-flower.)

It was regarded as of wonderful virtue in those myth-breathing middle ages. Its presence warded off the pestilence and served to unmask hypocrisy and

falsehood. Should a villain, indeed, invoke its testimony in his own behalf, it would, on the contrary, shrink still more, as if in horror of his crime.

And so it came to pass (in our old story) that in her strong but secluded castle had been living in widowed loneliness, for many a weary year, one of the fairest dames in all the fair province. Her husband had gone to distant Palestine to fight the battles of the Cross, and Dame Alice, in all those fifteen years of absence, had never heard a word about him. What could have been more sad than such a waiting?

One morning came a pilgrim over the draw-bridge to my lady's presence, and said to her:

"Alice, my beautiful Alice, dost thou not know thy long-lost husband, who has just escaped from dire captivity?"

Now Dame Alice had loved her husband most truly, and longed for his return most lovingly; but in the wretched being before her—old, ugly, and ragged—her heart most certainly failed to recognize its lord. At least must he produce some unmistakable proof of his daring assertion.

In no way disconcerted, the stranger drew from beneath his robe a rose of Jericho, and cried:

"In the name of God the Father, and of our Lord, and the saints, let this withered rose of Jericho bear witness to my claim by blooming again, like Moses's rod of old. If it should fail, let me be driven from this house as a vile impostor!"

The fair *châtelaine*, overcome with fear at this bold declaration, knew hardly what to do, and could only find courage to defer the test until the morrow, in the presence of competent witnesses.

And in the meantime she sought counsel from a noble knight of the neighborhood, whose heart was not a little interested in the result.

He at once set out to consult an old hermit of his acquaintance, once himself a Crusader, who simply said:

"Leave the knave to me, and have no fear of the result."

The next day came, and with it, in the castle court, a gallant company of knights and vassals, summoned by sound of trumpet, to see decided this most momentous question of love and loyalty; and all most curious, indeed, to see performed again the prophet's miracle before Egyptian Pharaoh.

The pilgrim pretender duly appeared, drew out his rose, related its virtues, called it to attest his truth and honor, and threw it into a fountain of the court, where, verily, it did revive and bloom, amid the astonished exclamations of the assembled spectators.

Alas, for poor Dame Alice! what now to do but loyally to yield her hand to him, who excited nothing but loathing in her soul.

But in this moment of terrible suspense a voice resounded clear and calm about the tumultuous crowd, bidding them all to wait. It was the ancient hermit who appeared.

"Begone, wretched impostor," cried he, "and you, fair noble lady, have no fear! 'Tis but a trick of Satan; this flower is only of his witchery, that hath been used to betray you. Behold, indeed, within my hand a veritable rose of Jericho given to me in my cell by good Peter the Hermit himself. Upon it I do swear before you all, this beggar is but a villain, an impostor, and a renegade. And may this rose of Jericho, blessed by his hand, who led our Christian armies to rescue from the infidel the sepulchre of Christ, remain forever withered if I lie!"

He spoke, and cast the rose into the same fountain, and, behold, at once it bloomed more beautiful even than the other!

The false baron turned and fled, pursued by a volley of stones and curses. And the fair lady, delivered from such horror, bent low to receive the hermit's benediction.

I wish I could add to my gentle legend that her true husband soon returned to delight her faithful heart, but even legends have their limits, and this one tells us no more.—*Churchman.*

Better suffer wrong, than do wrong.

## WILD MEN.

In the Island of Rio there are wild men who live in trees, and who have no language but cries, and in Sumatra there are men who live in the forests, with whom not only the Europeans, but the Malays themselves, can have no intercourse. They hunt tigers, not with a gun, but with arrows, which they blow out of a tube with such force, and which are so keen of point and touched with such deadly poison, that a wound is almost immediately fatal. Their tiger-skins, or elephant-tusks, they bring for barter. They never sell any thing—for money is about the most useless thing they can have. They cannot eat it, nor drink it, nor wear it. But as they have no wants, they exchange. Yet they themselves are never seen. They bring what they have to the edge of the forest, and leave it there; and the Malays come and place what they have to dispose of, and retire. If the offer is satisfactory, when they return again they find what they brought gone, and they take what is left and depart. If not they add a few trifles to tempt the eyes of these wild men of the woods, and so at last the exchange is effected, yet all the while the sellers keep themselves invisible.

## HORSE-SHOE LUCK.

George Caraway opened a blacksmith shop near a tavern where draymen were wont to stop. And that he might add to his daily score, he nailed up a horse-shoe over the door. "I'll keep the witches away," said he, "And the best of luck will come in to me; For whether we work, or whether we play, 'Tis good to keep the witches away!"

Who keeps a forge must attend the fire, And be ready to rivet the broken tire, To drive the nail with a steady stroke, To mend the hub, or replace the spoke, To swing the hammer with steady hold, Till out of the iron there comes the gold; For men must labor from day to day, If they want to keep the witches away.

The tavern was near, and this foolish George Frequented the bar, and forsook the forge, Till his customers found 'twas no use to stop For a hurried job at the blacksmith shop. When George's funds began to run low, He'd go to work, and the bellows blow, And strike on the anvil with hearty whack, But the luck that had left him would not come back!

He drove in the horse-shoe an extra nail, And changed its quarters, without avail, For a handy blacksmith, with ruddy forge, Appeared as a rival to foolish George; And his fame soon traveled the country round, For where he was wanted there he was found, And many went out of their way to stop At the cheerful and tidy blacksmith shop.

And—would you believe it?—this foolish George, Who favored the tavern and not the forge, Cursing his luck, as such people will, Kept drinking from morning till night, until His credit was gone, and his money too, And a long, long bill at the inn was due, And the shop, with the horse-shoe over the door, Was sold by the sheriff to pay the score!

To keep luck in and the wit hes away, We must bravely struggle from day to day; If ease we covet and labor shun, The odds are against us, ten to one, And the lesson taught us by foolish George, Is to hammer away at the honest forge; For doing our duty with manly pluck Is better than waiting for horse-shoe luck!

—Lancaster Examiner.

## MESSENGERS OF STATE.

In the transport of public despatches it is always essential that messengers should be employed who have their wits about them; they carry arms concealed about them, and are expected not to lose sight of their bags by day, while at night they must take such measures as will prevent any abstraction of their contents while they are asleep. When a Queen's messenger arrives in London, he is required to go straight to the Foreign Office, with all the dust of travel on him, and without lingering at any house on his road. He answers for his bag with his situation, and the occasions have been few indeed when a messenger's remissness has caused a despatch-bag to get lost. In old times State messengers were often attacked and plundered, and even nowadays in time of war they are now and then obliged to exercise great ingenuity in the conveyance of extra important documents. Despatches written in invisible ink, or reduced by photography to the smallest compass, have been carried inside toothpicks, in the hollow heels of boots, under the movable works of a watch, etc.; and there is a story told of a Frenchman who, in the war of 1870, bore to General Chanzy, through

the Prussian lines, a despatch from M. Gambetta which was contained within a franc-piece which had been hollowed, and the two halves of which were screwed together. Devices of this sort are very old, and Macaulay gives several examples of them in his account of the Jacobite plottings. In 1790 Mary of Modena wished to send some highly important despatches to her correspondents in London. They were too bulky to be concealed in the clothes of a single messenger, so it was necessary to employ two confidential persons. Not a scrap of paper was to be discovered about them, but their buttons contained letters written in invisible ink.

## THE DUMPLINGS' NIGHT.

The young ladies of Hungary observe a romantic custom on St. Sylvester's night, the saint who reveals the names of future husbands. The young ladies manufacture dumplings. Fate has chosen this simple farinaceous food to be the interpreter of its decrees. Every young lady of the company writes the names of all the eligible gentlemen of her acquaintance upon scraps of paper, which she hides in the dumplings, and at the moment the clock strikes twelve, she throws them into boiling water. Now it is the habit of dumplings when sufficiently cooked to reappear on the surface of the water, and the first dumpling which reappears on St. Sylvester's Eve contains the young lady's doom—that is, the name of her future husband. The second dumpling showing itself on the surface bears invariably the name of the happy lover's rival; while the third contains the name of the miserable creature who has been refused by the more or less fascinating lady. The screaming and laughing of the young people, the blushing and frowning on all those youthful faces at the moment when the boiling water sends up the first herald of matrimony, is such a pretty sight that it is not to be wondered at when the dumplings sometimes guess rightly.

## Pleasantries.

The minister who said he could preach without notes has been taken at his word by his congregation, which refuses to pay his salary. He sees his mistake.

An agricultural paper tells "How to Dress a Hog." But what's the use of dressing a hog? It would ruin its clothes before it had them on two hours.

A man will sit on a picket fence all the afternoon to see a base-ball match, but put him in a church pew for three quarters of an hour and he will wobble all over the seat.

The late Erastus Smith, of Hartford, a prominent lawyer there, used to be very neglectful of his personal appearance, and wore a soiled coat very much the worse for wear. One day Richard D. Hubbard, now Governor of the State, met Mr. Smith wearing a beautiful rose in his button-hole. "Is not this rose a beautiful one?" said Mr. Smith. "Now, Mr. Hubbard, can you imagine where I got it?" Quick as a flash Mr. Hubbard replied: "I should think it might have grown there."

THE STORY OF A ROSEBUD.—On Elm street, there doth live a good old gentleman whose heart is even more tender than a well-cooked beefsteak. And the other day, while taking a pleasant walk into the country, he suddenly came upon an object that excited his very warmest compassion. It was nothing less than a poor, weary tramp, seated by the roadside, clasping in his sun-browned fingers a beautiful rose. And the heart of our *g. o. g.* grew tenderer and tenderer. He softly stole to his side.

"My poor life-worn friend, that gentle flower, no doubt, brings back many past and happy days! I can see that you have been engaged in a sad, sad moralizing! I pity you! But there is no escape from memory! All—"

The tramp here raised a round, flat, good-humored face. "Stranger, I stole that posy at the last house but one. I wanted the stem to pick my teeth with."







General News.

HOME.

The Scarlet fever is said to be decimating the miners on the Silver Islets in Lake Superior.

Specie payments have been resumed without any excitement or embarrassment of any kind. On the 2nd inst., only one hundred and thirty thousand dollars of gold were paid out at the New York Sub-Treasury, and the banks took in more than they disbursed.

The cold wave which moved over our country from West to East last week, was one of the severest known for many years. The weather reports show a fall of from twenty to thirty degrees in the temperature, and this cold was intensified in many places by gales of wind that accompanied it. Along the Lakes the storm and drift was very severe, and railroad travel was again impeded, the passengers on some of the trains taking quarters in houses along the way, to keep from starving and freezing. At St. Louis the thermometer is said to have fallen forty degrees in a single night, and at St. Paul, Minnesota, it is reported as at from twenty to thirty degrees below zero. Here in Philadelphia, it was reported as at ten degrees below zero.

FOREIGN.

Millais is painting a portrait of Gladstone, in which each touch is said to be characteristic of both men.

A colossal statue of Alexander von Humboldt has been successfully cast in Munich, and will soon be erected in St. Louis.

The Protestant population of Holland numbers now about 2,000,000, against 1,200,000 Catholics and Jansenists.

The Government of the Swiss Confederation has informed the Catholic Cantons that it will not receive another Papal nuncio.

There were 15,059 failures in England and Ireland during the year 1878. There is just now great trouble among the Yorkshire miners, growing out of the reduction of their wages.

LONDON, Jan. 2.—The Post's Berlin despatch says the government has determined to give notice of the termination of all treaties of commerce by the end of the present year.

The Bible is now freely circulated in Portugal. In Lisbon and Oporto there are Protestant churches with an aggregate of about two hundred and fifty members.

The Græco-Turkish frontier commissioners will carry on their negotiations at Athens. The Grand Vizier states that he accepts the principle of the rectification of the frontier upon condition of Turkey retaining a strategic line and the powers engaging to observe neutrality in the event of Greece raising any further claims or attempting invasion.

BERLIN, Jan. 2.—The Emperor William, in receiving the Ministers yesterday, said he was not fatigued by attention to public affairs, although he has not yet regained his former elasticity. The painful impressions of the year have been softened by many proofs of loyalty. The Emperor said that the efforts of the Ministers to combat the dangers to the State undoubtedly were not without results, but that their full activity must still be directed to this object.

The Protestant Church authorities of Gotha, Germany, have prescribed a religious service to be used at cremations. The body is to be conveyed into a quasi chapel or hall, and placed over a particular spot; a hymn is sung, at the choice of the mourners, the usual sermon or address is given by the clergyman, and a chorale is chanted by a choir of boys, after which the body descends into the hall of cremation to slow music, the clergyman pronouncing a blessing as it goes out of sight. "Earth to earth" is of course not now recited, nor, it would seem, is "ashes to ashes." Friends of the deceased are allowed to make speeches, with the permission of the chaplain. The magistracy of Munich has just refused leave to set up a cremation hall, on the ground of its not being necessary. They had previously consulted the clergy and ministers of the city, and found that the Roman Catholics declined to approve, while the Protestants and Jews declared themselves to be indifferent.

ALMANACS FOR 1879.

The Reformed Church Almanac for 1879 is now out and ready for distribution. They may be had from our Publication Rooms, 907 Arch St., Phila., at the following reduced prices: 1 dozen copies \$0.65 50 copies 2.50 100 " 4.75 144 " 6.50. When sent by mail, 12 cents per dozen will be added for postage. A specimen copy sent by mail on the receipt of 8 cents in postage stamps. It will be found an excellent affair, and contains a large variety of matter calculated to impress upon the minds of Christians the duty they owe to God and to the Church. Not a family should be without a copy.

GERMAN ALMANAC.

We have procured a supply of the German Almanacs from the German Publishing House, Cleveland, Ohio, which will be sold at the following prices: A single copy sent by mail on the receipt of 12 cents in postage stamps. 1 doz. 90 cts., to which 17 cents must be added for postage, when sent by mail. When fifty or more copies are ordered, and they are sent by express, 7 cents per copy will be charged.

Married.

At Orbisonia, Pa., on Dec. 24, 1878, by Rev. J. M. Schick, Mr. D. P. Eneyart to Miss S. J. Daniels, all of Huntingdon Co., Pa.

On the 31st ult., in the Mount Moriah, (Md.) Reformed church, by the Rev. A. C. Geary, assisted by the Rev. J. W. Santee, Mr. D. Huettt Stonebraker to Mrs. Fannie M. Schuebel, all of Washington county, Md.

Dec. 24th, 1878, by Rev. E. H. Dieffenbacher, Mr. Charles G. Kemble to Miss Amanda Barret, both of Kent county, Del.

On the 24th of Dec., by Rev. A. Houtz, Mr. Nathan Yost to Miss Phoebe E. Wenner, both of Columbia Co., Pa.

Dec. 26th, by the Rev. H. Wissler, at the bride's home, near Cressgetown, Md., Mr. Jacob A. Hankey to Miss Sarah Isabella Graham, both of Frederick county.

On the 24th ult., at Keedysville, Md., by Rev. A. C. Geary, Mr. Daniel W. Leine to Miss Martha J. Spielman.

On the 25th ult., by the same, near Downsville, Md., Mr. Isaac S. Long to E. Estella Hagerman.

On the 26th ult., by the same, at Keedysville, Md., Mr. John Hetzell to Miss Malissa Breeden.

On the same day, by the same, at Sharpburg, Md., Mr. Samuel Jennings to Miss Annie M. Spielman.

On the same day, by the same, at Keedysville, Md., Mr. Stephen F. Renner to Miss Annie M. Hanger.

At the residence of the bride's parents, on Dec. 24th, 1878, by Rev. J. David Miller, Mr. Herman Davis to Miss S. Jennie, daughter of Fred Nicodemus, Esq., all of Martinsburg, Blair Co., Pa.

On the same day, by the same, in Woodcock Valley, Bedford Co., Pa., Mr. Harry M. Steele to Miss Barbara K., daughter of Mr. Eli Hoover, all of Liberty Twp., Bedford Co., Pa.

Dec. 28, at the pastor's residence, by Rev. G. W. Roth, Mr. William Clinton Hager, of Tinicum, Pa., to Miss Eliza Snyder, of the same place.

On Dec. 24, at the home of the bride's parents, by Rev. Dr. C. H. Leinbach, Willoughby C. Kline, M. D., of Millersburg, Berks Co., and Miss Amanda M. Ulrich, of near Myerstown, Pa.

Obituaries.

DIED.—At his late residence in Shannondale, Clarion county, Pa., on the 16th of November, 1878, after a lingering and severe illness, Mr. Daniel Yeany, aged 63 years, 8 months, and 27 days.

Mr. Yeany was highly respected as a neighbor and citizen. This was apparent from the large concourse of people in attendance at his funeral. He was a member of the Reformed Church from his early youth, and for many years an elder in the same. Though not without his failings, yet his earnest efforts seemed to be exerted in the right direction. He was generous and charitably disposed, and deeply devoted in spiritual affairs, the more so, during the latter part of his sojourn upon earth. His friends have reason to hope that it is well with him—that he died in the Lord.

Mr. Yeany leaves a widow, two children, a number of grandchildren, and many other relatives and friends to mourn his departure. We trust their loss is his eternal gain. J. B. S.

DIED.—After a brief, but painful illness, on Thursday night, Dec. 27th, 1878, Mr. David M. Bierly, in the 30th year of his age.

The deceased was a worthy and consistent member of the Reformed church at St. Paul's, in Augusta Co., Va. He was an amiable Christian gentleman, and in his deportment even and kind. The writer never saw him appear to be thrown off his guard, or heard him utter an unkind word. As a husband, he was affectionate and kind, and as a neighbor, obliging and true. His uniform, consistent life had drawn around him a large circle of friends, as was manifested by the unusually large procession which followed him to the grave, notwithstanding the coldness of the weather.

Bro. Bierly will be greatly missed at St. Paul's church, where his seat was always occupied, unless providentially prevented. He has left a wife and a large number of relations to mourn his early death; yet they can be consoled with the assurance, that their loss is his eternal gain. We commend his widow to the care of that God, who has promised to "temper the wind to the shorn lamb." C.

DIED.—In Altoona, Pa., Dec. 11th, 1878, Winfield Scott Iokes, aged 33 years and 29 days. He came to his death by a very sad and sore accident while at work in the railroad shops. He was a good man. A. C. W.

DIED.—In Tinicum, Pa., Dec. 24, 1878, Mr. John Wagner, aged 77 years, 9 months, 12 days.

DIED.—In Altoona, Pa., Dec. 27th, James Leonard, son of Andrew C. and Mary V. Vaulain, aged 8 yrs. and 3 months.

Blessed are the early dead; but the living need the Comforter, especially in the freshness of their sorrow. God pity a mother from whose arms a strong child is suddenly torn by membranous croup. A. C. W.

Acknowledgments.

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Days.	Years.	Days.	Years.	Days.	Years.
25	293	1 28	2 170	3 119	4 73
28	315	1 271	2 324	3 208	4 176
32	344	1 330	2 321	3 317	4 318
35	369	1 329	2 324	3 317	4 318
40	4 49	2 96	3 125	4 143	5 86

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